

ION SNOW
WHY I PUT MY
MOTHER IN A HOME

FEATURES, PAGE 18

HOT FASHION
SWIMWEAR TO BE
SEEN IN THIS SUMMER

FASHION, PAGE 19

HOSTAGE DRAMA
THE THEATRE GROUP
WHO KIDNAP YOU

THE EYE

THE INDEPENDENT

Wednesday 3 June 1998 45p (IR 50p) No 3,627

Ministers launch war on drug prices

By Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

MINISTERS are preparing to take on the drugs industry by introducing new checks on the cost of drugs to the National Health Service, according to a leaked Labour policy document.

The report on the future of the NHS also suggests a new, wider role for nurses which would allow them to carry out tasks currently undertaken by doctors.

Plans to demand proof that drugs are cost-effective before they are put on the market could force companies to relocate outside Britain, an industry spokesman said last night.

A draft consultation paper approved by the Prime Minister says that in future both the overall benefits and the costs of drug treatment must be considered. "Drug companies will have to be more forthcoming with information on their products. In the future the NHS will be looking for further and better particulars about the effectiveness of drugs and their cost-effectiveness," it says.

The paper, drawn up by a policy commission co-chaired by Frank Dobson, Secretary of State for Health, says Labour recognises the importance of commercial drugs research carried out in Britain. But the suggestion that firms might have to



Leaked document reveals Labour plan to force companies to cut the cost of medicines

jump an extra hurdle before they can sell their products was greeted with dismay by the industry. At present, companies have to prove that drugs are safe and effective and that their manufacturing process has adequate quality control.

Richard Ley, spokesman for

the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry, said it was not possible to assess costs properly before drugs hit the market. "Many companies might be looking at whether their research is correctly based in this country ... They might well be starting to say to them-

selves, 'I'm not sure we are necessarily based in the right place'."

Drug trials on a few thousand people could not be used to gather evidence on possible prices for the drugs, he said.

Between 1986 and 1996, the NHS drugs bill almost tripled from £1.6bn to £4.5bn. This was

partly because more drugs were prescribed and partly because the average cost of a prescription rose from £4.21 to £8.12.

Controversy has blown up over a number of expensive drugs which are available in some health authority areas but not in others. Beta Interferon, a treatment for multiple sclerosis, costs around £10,000 per year, while Taxol (pictured above) - which is prescribed for advanced ovarian cancer - costs around £7,000 per year.

A large-scale relocation by pharmaceutical companies would hit the British economy hard because the UK is one of the leading centres in the world for drug research.

The paper, which has already been discussed by Labour's National Policy Forum and which will be debated in at least 45 local policy forums around the country, also asks whether nurses' roles should be broader.

"Restrictions on extending opportunities account for the top three reasons why nurses leave the NHS. Is there too much rigidity between professions, for example between doctors and nurses - would more flexibility between professions enhance job fulfilment?" it asks.

The Royal College of Nursing has already successfully pushed for a change in the law which allows nurses to employ

doctors instead of doctors employing nurses. Two clinics are already run by nurses but employ general practitioners to come in and help.

A spokeswoman said "nurse practitioners" were already able to screen patients themselves, admit or discharge people and prescribe drugs. But this was not a cheap option, she said. Nurses wanted more resources as well as more freedom.

A Labour Party spokeswoman said negotiations on the cost of drugs were already going on as part of discussions through an existing forum on pricing. "This is really about how pharmaceutical companies and the NHS can work together."



Safe from the abattoir since the great escape, Butch (left) and Sundance have been enjoying the superstar life in Kent. Now they are going on a national tour Photograph: Brian Harris

Available for parties, fetes and shows... at £1,500 an appearance

NOT SINCE the heyday of Pinky and Perky and Miss Piggy have hogs been this big in show business. The Tamworth Two, who became superstars after their famous escape from an abattoir in Malmesbury, Wiltshire, last January, have organised a series of appearances for a national tour.

Butch and Sundance are commanding £1,500 fees from agricultural shows across the country. Their first gig will be later this month at the Three Counties Show in Malvern, Worcestershire.

They are taking their new role seriously. No pot bellies for these ginger boys. Fitness training is afforded by a hungry stay with outdoor grassy run, wallowing area and canopy to guard against sunstroke. Despite an insensi-

tively placed bacon buttie stall opposite, they are thought to be unlikely to break up their accommodation or drive a Rolls-Royce into the pool. But they will be subject to security in case they try to go their own way again.

Chief executive of the show, Chris Milne, is especially pleased to have secured Butch and Sundance. "We're an agricultural show and we shouldn't take ourselves too seriously. We thought families would find the Tamworths Two both amusing and relevant to farm life. The show has never had any celebrities before apart from government ministers and our royal visitors."

The show starts on 16 June and the organisers hope to break the record of just over 100,000 visitors. The Tamworth Two should help to fill the pens.

Dying baby 'ignored' by midwives

By Jeremy Laurance
Health Editor

THREE hospital midwives, who ignored signs of foetal distress during the birth of a baby who later died, have been found guilty of professional misconduct.

Benjamin Clark died 10 days after birth, following a traumatic 12-hour labour at Kingston hospital, Surrey. His parents, who were at first told the death

was a "terrible accident" said it had taken them three years to discover the truth. "Benjamin was a perfectly healthy baby until there was a problem in the labour," his father Andrew Clark said yesterday.

"He died because of the professional misconduct of the three midwives. Since then, we have had three very long, hard and difficult years to get to where we are now, to find out what happened."

Andrew and Michele Clark said they were given no information about their son's death by the hospital until a professional review concluded in September 1996, more than a year later, that the "likely cause" was an overdose of the drugs used to induce labour, which had resulted in his brain being starved of oxygen.

Last week, the UK Central Council on Nursing and Midwifery found that midwives

Daphne Moore and Nicole Collins failed to recognise signs of abnormal contractions during Ms Clark's labour and had ignored a heart monitor that indicated the foetus was in distress.

Ms Moore was also found to have continued to administer the labour-inducing drug, syntocinon, despite the signs of foetal distress. A third midwife, Helen Kiddell, was found to have failed to keep adequate records.

The three were formally cautioned by the council but allowed to continue working.

A spokesman for the UKCC said that it was "extremely rare" for midwives to be found guilty of misconduct. Details of the decision were only disclosed yesterday when the parents spoke about their ordeal to the Press Association.

Mr Clark, a chartered accountant, said: "We often wondered if we had the strength to

see it through. We were offered no support from the hospital, until far too late. No grieving relatives should have to wait that long. The pain and suffering when your child dies is the worst thing in the world."

The Clarks have complained to the General Medical Council about the consultant obstetrician who was responsible for Michelle's care, and are planning legal action for compensation from Kingston NHS trust.

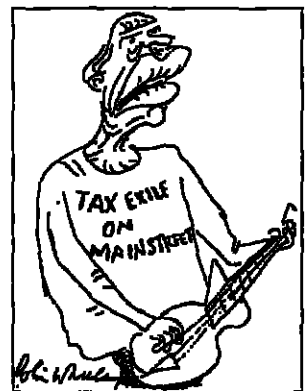
In brief

Moaning Stones

In a blatant case of Gimme Tax Shelter, the Rolling Stones complained to Parliament yesterday about a plan by the Treasury to close a loophole which will mean overseas earnings being taxed. Page 5

Kashoggi sued

Adnan Kashoggi, once thought to be the wealthiest arms dealer in the world, bounced cheques totalling £3.2m during a £10m gambling spree. Mr Kashoggi, who is Dodi Fayed's uncle, is being sued for the money - plus interest thought to total around £5m - by London Ritz Casino Limited. Page 3



Indonesia crisis

As Indonesia stares economic disaster in the face, the country's new reformist leader, BJ Habibie, risks falling victim to renewed popular fury. Page 14

Failing heads face the sack

By Judith Judd
Education Editor

FAILING schools which do not improve within two years will be closed and the head and governors sacked. Most will re-open under new management, the Government said yesterday.

Seventy-four schools are still on the failing list after two years and Ministers are predicting that around 25 will have to close in September. The Government's decision comes at a time when the percentage of schools failed by inspectors is rising sharply.

David Blunkett, the Secre-

tary of State for Education, warned that he would use new powers in legislation before Parliament to close schools or to insist that they close and re-open with a new head, governors and staff. The new heads will decide which staff they wish to keep. All could be sacked, Mr Blunkett said.

The 74 schools are not being named because the new closure policy replaces that of "naming and shaming" schools into improvement announced just a year ago. Blakelaw school in Newcastle-upon-Tyne has already been given a fresh start and Mr Blunkett announced

yesterday that Earl Marshal School in Sheffield will also close and reopen in September.

He said: "This is part of our original programme to ensure that no child is left languishing in a school which is failing. It is imperative to give them the kind of education which they deserve and which we would want for our children."

Overall, nearly 500 schools educating 140,000 children are at present failing.

Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, blamed local authorities for not acting quickly enough to turn round schools: 40 per cent of sec-

ondary schools inspected last year were causing serious concern when they were first inspected four years earlier.

Doug McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said: "Threats such as placing a rigid two-year guillotine on schools under special measures will drive away the best staff and not attract new staff."

Overall, nearly 500 schools educating 140,000 children are at present failing.

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هكذا من الأصل

Gambling's wheel of fortune: A multi-millionaire spins into trouble at the Ritz while lottery fever drives a betting nation

The loser: Khashoggi, the bouncing cheques and the £10m casino spree

By Kate Watson-Smyth and Kim Sengupta

ADNAN KHASHOGGI, once reputed to be the richest man in the world, wrote cheques totalling £3.2m which bounced, during a £10m gambling spree, the High Court was told yesterday.

The former billionaire arms dealer and one-time confidant of Middle Eastern potentates is now being sued for the money - plus interest thought to total around £5m - by London Ritz Casino Limited.

The court heard that Mr Khashoggi, the brother-in-law of Harrods owner Mohamed Al Fayed, gambled £10.1m during a nine-week period between the end of January and the start of April 1986 at the roulette wheel.

At first he was successful and his cheques were honoured but his luck at the tables changed and 16 cheques for £200,000 each, drawn on an account with the Swiss Banking Corporation of Geneva on three days at the end of March and on 10 April, were refused on presentation because of "insufficient funds".

But Mr Khashoggi claimed that the debt was legally unenforceable because he had an agreement with the casinos management which effectively allowed him to continue gambling on credit - said to be illegal under Section 16 of the 1968 Gaming Act.

This is the latest public airing of the affairs of Mr Khashoggi, who became fabulously wealthy from comparatively modest beginnings, and was, for a while, seldom out of the headlines.

An international Mr Fixit with lucrative connections, most of his money was made from commissions paid on sales of aircraft and arms to the Middle East, especially Saudi Arabia, by Western companies.

With wealth came all the trappings of success - homes in Europe, the Middle East, the United States and East Africa; a private DC9 jet



The chips are down for Adnan Khashoggi (right) who faces a court battle over alleged gambling debts at the Ritz (above)



Photographs: Red/AP

July 1990 saying "now can you turn your attention to paying this debt" and he did not and proceedings started the following year," said Mr Merriman.

Mr Khashoggi, who was once estimated to be worth £2.4bn, gambled at the Ritz Casino on 13 occasions, the court heard.

"All prior cheques were honoured," he said. "During this period Mr Khashoggi was initially successful and it was only in later stages that he lost and those are the cheques that were drawn to meet the gambling that was unsuccessful," he added.

"On 10 April 1986 Mr Khashoggi bought chips worth £1.2m. He recovered most of it.

"The chips in his hand resulted in us sending a cheque for £900,000 to his bank and £100,000 in a cheque which he then cashed. His cheque to the casino for £1.2m was dishonoured."

But Mr Khashoggi's defence was that he had an understanding with unnamed casino managers that his cheques would not be met on presentation because he was awaiting funds due to him in the aftermath of the Iran-Iraq war.

The cheques were therefore a "sham" and non negotiable because he was being allowed to gamble unlawfully on credit.

Mr Merriman said that after that time Mr Khashoggi stopped gambling at the Ritz Casino.

"But he continued gaming substantially at Aspinall's and Maxim's and indeed on 28 March, the day when he came to the Ritz and drew cheques for £600,000 which he lost, on that same day he went to Maxim's and drew cheques in favour of that casino for £500,000 which, as far as we know, he paid."

"Subsequently he gambled in November 1986, also at Maxim's, where he seemed to lose nearly £3m which he seems to have paid," Mr Merriman said.

"We do not know why we were not paid."

and a yacht, named after his daughter Nabila, which became a byword for ostentatious luxury.

In 1961 he married Soraya, who grew up in a Leicester council house as Sandra Daly. When they divorced in 1974 she sued her husband for half his fortune, estimated then at £2.4bn. But she did not get to continue enjoying the trappings of wealth and a

few years ago was discovered living in a three-bedroom house in Hungerford, Berkshire.

Mr Khashoggi's business dealings continued to attract controversy. His company, the Triad Corporation, faced serious difficulties and the grand executive toys, the jets and the limousines, faced being impounded.

At one point the tycoon ended up in an American jail, accused of helping Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos dispose of some of their Filipino loot.

Mr Khashoggi survived his ordeal and, after a lean period, was once again in the news last year when he was said to be involved in a bid to buy into a company which con-

trolled Italy's motorway network.

Yesterday at the High Court, Nicholas Merriman, QC, for the Ritz, said that between 1986 and 1990, Mr Khashoggi made repeated promises to pay back the money but claimed that he was having financial difficulties - he was involved in a US Congressional hearing over the Iran-Iraq war and in criminal proceed-

ings against himself and Imelda Marcos.

In 1990 a New York jury cleared him of conspiring with Mrs Marcos to buy \$360m of property in Manhattan with allegedly stolen Philippine funds.

"When these proceedings were out of the way the managing director of the company sent him a fax in

The wagers: Betting on a brighter future

By Kim Sengupta and Sally Woodford

TO THE Victorians it was the "brother of iniquity, and the father of mischief", but in Britain today gambling is a booming and guilt-free business.

As social mores have changed, so has the stereotype of the ordinary gambler. No longer is it a loner in the cloth cap and a rolled-up rag wasting his afternoons in the bookies. Nowadays, families watch the National Lottery draw together on television, couples fly off for casino breaks to Las Vegas, and it is possible to play on an Internet casino. Politics too has become lucrative for bookmakers, with record numbers putting a wager on the last election.

Sport continues to draw the vast bulk of the wagers. But it is not just racing. There has been a huge upsurge of betting on football, and the coming World Cup in France will, say the bookmakers, be the biggest

ever gambling event in history, taking in an estimated £100m.

Football's rise in the betting stakes began with matches becoming accessible to viewers through satellite television. It got a further fillip when young middle-class professional males with larger disposable incomes began to embrace the game.

Other sports like golf and tennis are also attracting the punters, although they have yet to attain the popularity of football. Graham Sharpe, of bookmakers William Hill, said: "Football has been the great success story... and many of those betting do not think of themselves as regular gamblers, but as putting their wits and knowledge against the bookies. It is also a sign that gambling is rapidly losing its stigma."

One person who had found football betting eminently acceptable is Adrian Fitzpatrick, who owns a florists' business in Birmingham. In the last World Cup he took £395,000 from

William Hill on a betting pattern which hinged on Brazil lifting the trophy.

This time the boys from Brazil can get 44-year-old Mr Fitzpatrick £544,500 by winning the Cup. This is the second part of a two-strand £18,000 bet, the first part of which, Arsenal winning the premiership, has already been achieved.

Mr Fitzpatrick said: "I would certainly never think of myself as a traditional punter. I have an interest in football and this is a fun thing to do."

The established casinos in London have not, in fact, benefited significantly from the gambling boom. The number of customers has risen in three years from 11 million to 11.3 million. One problem appears to be that prospective gamblers have to become members. No such constraints apply in Nevada. Flights to Las Vegas are normally full. One of the airlines, Unijet, says they have been fully booked for the three



People queuing to join the National Lottery, which has sold £17.5bn in tickets since 1994

years the route has been operating.

The National Lottery is seen as one of the main underlying factors behind the change in public perception of gambling. Since its launch in November 1994 it has sold £17.5bn in tickets. The lottery game takes in on average £90m a week even without scratchcard sales. Paul Davis, a Surrey University psychologist who works with the Pathfinder Addiction Service,

said: "People now see [gambling] as another aspect of life."

But the potential problem has led the industry to back GamCare, which has been set up to study the social impact of gambling, and to help problem gamblers. Its director, Paul Bellringer, said: "We are not anti-gambling. But it is a rapidly growing phenomenon, and we want to encourage people to be in control of gambling, instead of gambling controlling them."

The winners: £1.5m a week for Camelot

By Janine Gibson

CAMELOT, the National Lottery organisers, made more than £1.5m a week last year, despite falling scratchcard sales and the "disappointing" launch of the TV Dreams television game.

Announcing its annual results yesterday, the group repeated its claim to be "the world's most efficient lottery operator" as it tried to defuse criticism of further pay rises to its executive directors and a £10m increase in pre-tax profits.

Last year, directors received 40 per cent pay rises after lower contributions to good causes, falling ticket sales and decreased profits. This year, the operator trumpeted a record "jackpot" for good causes and directors received a pay increase of, on average, 1 per cent.

It was not all good news for Camelot, however. Although ticket sales hit an all-time high of £5.5bn, largely due to the success of the midweek draw, the

public is less enamoured of the scratchcards with sales of National Lottery Instant Games falling by more than £75m.

A further blow came from the launch of the TV Dreams game in February. The tickets for the game are tied in to the BBC's troubled Saturday night show *The National Lottery Big Ticket*, which has been criticised as being both over-commercial and of poor quality. Camelot admitted yesterday that the £20m sales have been "disappointing".

Camelot finance director Peter Murphy blamed the rules of the TV Dreams game, which will end next month. He explained: "The game is probably more complex than it needs to be. We are doing research into why it hasn't been as successful as we expected." He said Camelot would also try to increase sales of the Instant scratchcards.

Camelot emphasised it paid out £1.6bn to good causes and £708m to the Government in the year ending 31 March 1998. Justifying profits of £80.9m before tax, Camelot said these still represented less than 1p in every pound spent on the lottery.

Mr Murphy said high rewards are justified: "There are not many businesses where you can say the UK is the world leader." The directors' bonuses will be significantly lower next year, he added, when the three-year incentive plan ends. Instead, staff will receive a loyalty bonus, based on the length of the notice period in their contracts, to stay on until the end of Camelot's licence to run the lottery - in September 2001.

Mr Murphy was confident that yesterday's results put the group on track to have its licence renewed. "If the key is maximising the returns to the good causes, then we will stand on our track record. The Government has to decide whether it is more important to have a non-profit-making operator, or to maximise returns to the good causes."

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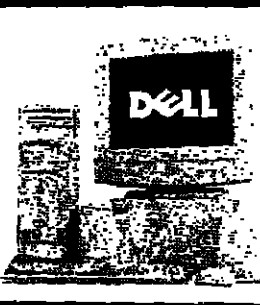
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Builder Barbara Jones (left), pictured reroofing a house in Horton in Ribblesdale, North Yorkshire, set up the all-female construction company Amazon Nails nine years ago and yesterday won a Queen Elizabeth Scholarship for crafts and training
Photograph: Asadour Guzelian

Drink advertising 'inspires young to start taking drugs'

By Glenda Cooper
Consumer Affairs Correspondent

HEAVY advertising of alcohol – particularly alcopops – and cigarettes may be encouraging young people to take illegal drugs according to a report published yesterday.

If young people are to avoid taking illicit drugs, the way we treat alcohol and tobacco must be seen as part of the whole context, says the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs – adding that "alcohol is as much a dance drug as ecstasy or amphetamines".

The council said it was hard to prove links between one type of psychoactive substance and another. "But our conclusion is

that if society intends to provide young people with an environment which helps them not to take illicit drugs... or to reduce the harms which they do, the climate of awareness and beliefs on alcohol and tobacco must be seen as part of the context."

It focuses on the controversial alcoholic soft drinks which have been criticised for their advertising in the past. "Young people live in a society which heavily advertises alcohol and tobacco," says the report. "The advertising of alcopops has on occasion seemingly been targeted at young people and has at times veered towards encouragement of drunkenness."

For many, illegal and legal drugs are part of the same world rather than being seen as separate, and the report notes that studies have shown that those who drink and smoke are more likely to try illegal drugs.

Mark Bennett, a spokesman for Alcohol Concern, said one of the great misunderstandings in society was that alcohol was not really a drug. "We totally agree with this report," he said. "Under-age drinkers buying alcohol are all part of a risk-taking culture, which includes taking illegal drugs. I think we need to carry out more re-

search into whether smoking cigarettes and drinking alcohol can lead to harder drugs, but I think it is clear that there is a cultural link."

The report also warned anti-drug campaigners against trying to stop young people going to raves, clubs and festivals because drugs may be available there. Rather they should realise that music and dance culture should be engaged rather than "deplored" and the places popular with young people should be used for drug prevention.

In a wide-ranging review, the council says drug misuse cannot be tackled without linked employment, education, housing and crime prevention measures. "We conclude that Britain in the 1980s seems to have been in an unhappy sense recapitulating the American experience and discovering that when heroin is widely available and... deprivation exists, the two factors are likely to make a connection."

It suggests involving the whole community in both discouraging drug abuse and helping users. Local authorities and drug users should also form a "social contract" under which anti-social behaviour such as dumping used syringes would be unacceptable.

Police surgeon on cell-death charge

By Jason Bennetto
Crime Correspondent

A POLICE surgeon was yesterday charged with manslaughter following the death of a 22-year-old man he attended in a police cell. It is believed to be the first case of its kind.

Dr Sharwan Kumar Mehra, 67, is charged in connection with the death of Craig Vose, who was found dead at Pilgrim Street police station in Newcastle upon Tyne from a suspected overdose of the heroin substitute methadone and sleeping tablets in March last year. He had been arrested the previous day on suspicion of shoplifting.

It is understood that a prescription was made out for Mr Vose following an examination in his cell. A police spokesman said Dr Mehra of Ponteland, Northumberland, had attended

Mr Vose for a "medical matter". Dr Mehra was suspended from the Police Surgeon Scheme in May last year in connection with the death. He was one of a number of doctors contracted to Northumbria Police to treat people who were considered ill in custody.

The General Medical Council has been informed of the police inquiry and manslaughter charge, but Dr Mehra – who has a GP surgery in Newcastle – has not been suspended from practising. He is due to appear before magistrates on 13 July.

Northumbria police's disciplinary department, carried out an investigation. overseen by the independent Police Complaints Authority, and a file of evidence was passed to the Crown Prosecution Service. An inquest into Mr Vose's death has been opened and adjourned.

IN BRIEF

Army chaplain cleared

AN ARMY chaplain was yesterday cleared of groping, kissing and fondling a soldier's wife after telling a court martial that the allegations were nothing more than lies made up by a "woman scorned".

In the first court martial to involve an Army chaplain, self-confessed flirt Captain Richard Landall was cleared of four counts of indecently assaulting the woman, known only as Mrs X. After the hearing at Aldershot, Hampshire, Capt Landall said: "I thank God that justice has been done. I have prayed throughout this case that the truth would come out."

Toll road disclosure

SIGNIFICANT parts of the secret agreement to build Britain's first private toll road should be revealed to the legal team acting for residents who oppose the scheme, a judge ruled yesterday. The Department of the Environment and contractors Midland Expressway have been given 14 days to appeal or hand over the documents on the building of the Birmingham Northern Relief Road.

Bid for Moore's medals

THE Football Association and National Football Museum are drawing up a joint Lottery bid to keep Bobby Moore's World Cup medals in Britain.

They are hoping to buy the former England and West Ham captain's collection of medals and caps from his estranged wife Tina, who has announced they would be put up for sale.

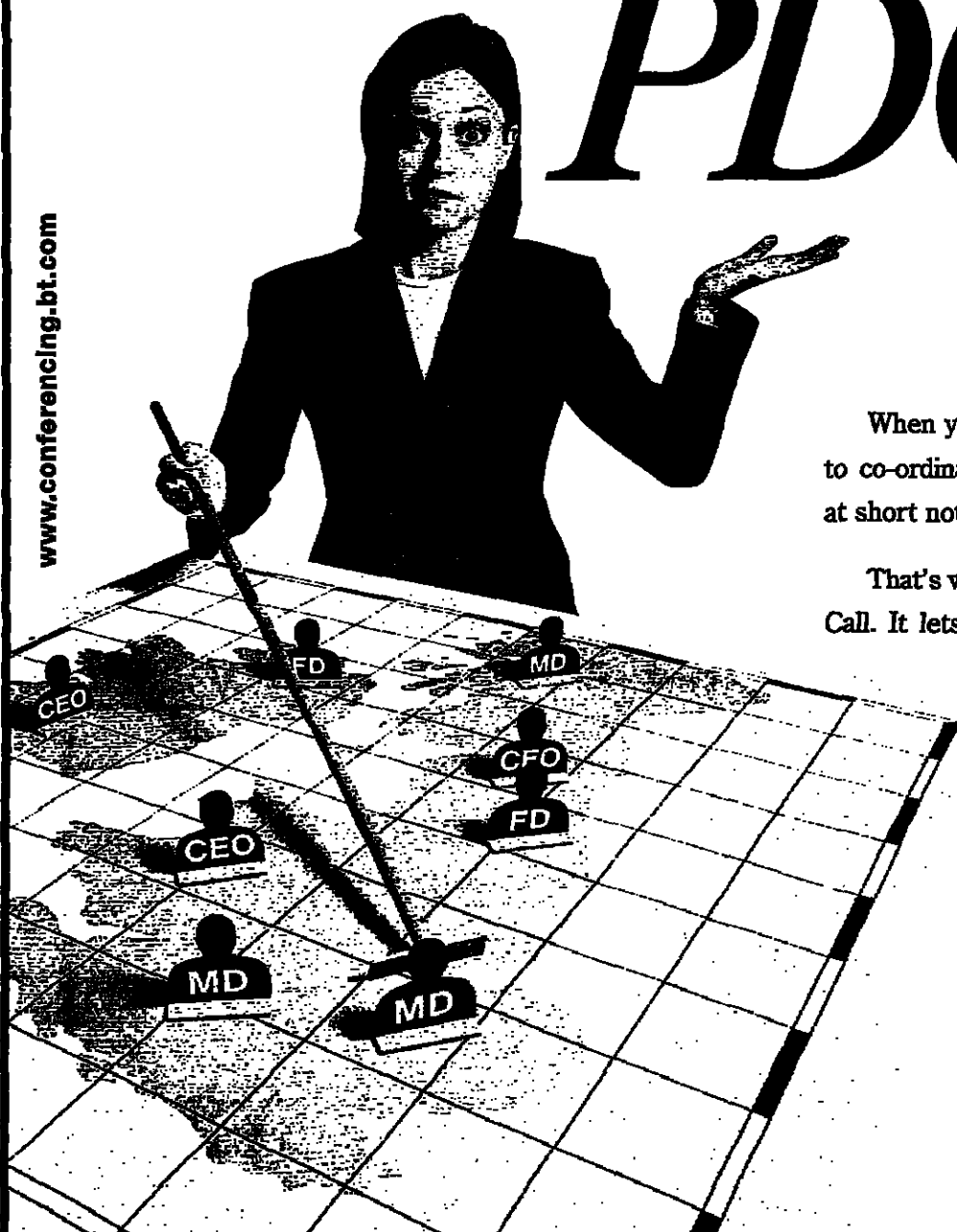
School break cutback

SCHOOLS are cutting back on break times – and harming their pupils' social skills, says a study published today. A survey carried out by London University found that schools were cutting lunch hours and abolishing afternoon breaks either to increase the amount of time spent teaching or to reduce bad behaviour.

Sock fetishists pulled up

SADO-MASOCHISTS Steven Bain, 27, and Steven Gawthrop, 31, both of Southport, Merseyside, were jailed for 18 months at Liverpool Crown Court after admitting paying young men to beat them with belts in a flat littered with 10,000 socks.

How do you get two MDs, a CEO and an FD together PDAQ?



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Families plan appeal as Spanish court finds bar owner guilty of ordering hitmen to beat her partner to death

British woman gets 27 years for Tenerife killing

A BRITISH businesswoman was jailed for 27 years yesterday for hiring two hitmen to kill her partner in Tenerife, the Foreign Office confirmed.

Jackie Ambler, 33, originally from near Doncaster, South Yorkshire, was sentenced along with the two men she hired to carry out the killing in the bar she ran with the victim Michael O'Hara, 39, from Wakefield.

The bouncers Stanley Stewart, 31, from Clackmannanshire, and Gary Holmes, 31, from Littlehampton, West Sussex, were each sentenced to 29 years' imprisonment - the most severe sentences reported to have been handed down to Britons in post-Franco Spain.

Ambler denied plotting the killing with the two men or promising to pay them hit money during the trial at Santa Cruz Provincial Court.

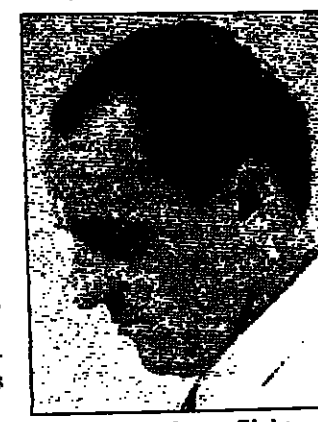
Mr O'Hara was beaten to death at the couple's British-style pub in Los Cristianos in 1995.

Ambler's father, John Ambler, 61, said the family was devastated by the news.

"We were all expecting her to be freed, so we hadn't made any contingency plans for this type of verdict. 'Jackie's in a terrible state and I will be try-



Hitmen Gary Holmes, above, and Stanley Stewart, below, were each jailed for 29 years



ing to organise a flight out there as soon as I can," said Mr Ambler, of Rossington, near Doncaster.

The family are now plan-

ning to contact their MP, Caroline Flint, and the pressure group Fair Trials Abroad in an attempt to get the verdict overturned.

"We can't understand how she could have been convicted. None of the prosecution's seven witnesses turned up and it just doesn't seem real," he said.

Stewart's mother Helen, 59, wept when she learned of the sentence.

Mrs Stewart, from Tullibody, Clackmannanshire, who last spoke to her son by phone over a week ago, said: "I don't know where to turn."

She added: "There is a chance of an appeal but I can't go over there in case he loses that. I couldn't face leaving him in jail."

She continued: "It's such a shock. He told me not to worry and everything would sort itself out."

"The whole family will be devastated as we were expecting him to come home," she added.

"I would like to see him freed and returned home like the British nurses from Saudi Arabia last week, but I can't afford to pay."

Mrs Stewart and her eight other children were unable to make it to the Spanish island for the trial.



Jackie Ambler: Family were expecting her to be freed and are planning to fly out to Tenerife

Railways facing strike chaos

By Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

THE threat of widespread disruption this summer to the rail network and London Underground will move a step nearer today when union leaders are expected to announce further votes for strike action.

More than 2,500 employees at five companies which conduct maintenance work on the old British Rail system are understood to have voted for action in common with seven out of eight other firms where results have been declared.

The new votes for stoppages could mean delays and cancellations through most of the network. A national delegates' meeting on Saturday will advise the leadership of the RMT transport union on the timing and nature of action.

The first strike could take place on 16 June, although some companies have agreed to talks on pay and conditions, the issue at the heart of the dispute.

Leaders of the RMT predict an "overwhelming" vote for action by their 7,000 members at London Underground.

Tube staff are concerned that their terms and conditions will be undermined as part of the Deputy Prime Minister's plan partly to privatise the system. An RMT official said employees believed the scheme would result in "longer hours, lower earnings and fewer staff just as they have elsewhere".

The first action could take place on 11 June.

Stones roll into row over tax loopholes

by Paul McCann
Media Editor

IN A blatant case of Gimme Tax helter, the Rolling Stones complained to Parliament yesterday about a plan by the Treasury to close a loophole which will mean overseas earnings being taxed.

It would seem that life on the road is no longer groupies, asked hotel rooms and rioting as for the Stones any more. Instead the fifty-something millionaires live a kind of Tax exile on Main Street where accountants work out the band's Foreign Earnings Deduction (ED).

Now one of those advisers is written to the Commons Finance Bill Committee, which is considering Gordon Brown's budget and a measure that would end the deduction. This allows all Britons working abroad to avoid paying tax on the money they earn.

The Rolling Stones' tax adviser, Joyce Smyth, and the



Mick Jagger: Stones have complained over tax plans

Conservative Party, which released the letter, claimed that the real victims of the proposed change would be the stage hands, hairdressers and electricians who accompany bands on tour.

In fact the big losers will be the Stones band-members themselves. Their multi-million-pound fees for the world tour will be hit because the Gov-

ernment plans to back-date the measure to Budget day - 17 March.

The plan was being discussed by the Finance Committee yesterday, but Ms Smyth disclosed that she has been writing to the Government for some months on the subject and that band-members have made representations to the Government.

Ms Smyth wrote: "My clients fully understand that it is the Government's policy to introduce anti-avoidance measures and to close tax loopholes."

"What we consider deeply unjust, however, is the retrospective nature of this particular change."

The Conservative Party quite wisely claimed that the changes would also affect charity aid workers on overseas postings and named Save the Children as concerned about the changes. The party realised that, all in all, there probably isn't that much sympathy for the Rich Devils.

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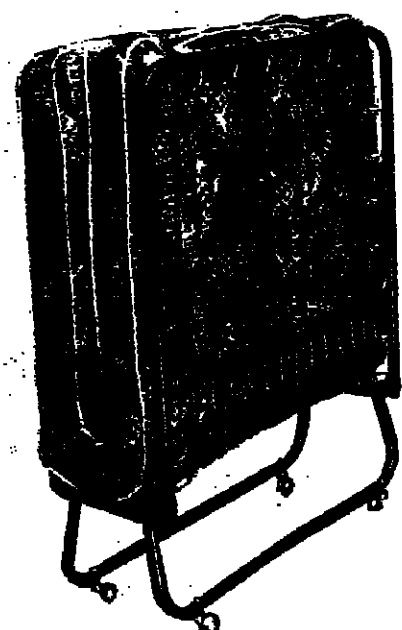
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BA wins race for high-speed tunnel rail link



Bob Ayling's consortium put up the winning proposals

By Randeep Ramesh
and Colin Brown

EUROSTAR is to be handed over to a consortium headed by British Airways and National Express - beating off arch-rivals Virgin in the race to run the high-speed train service.

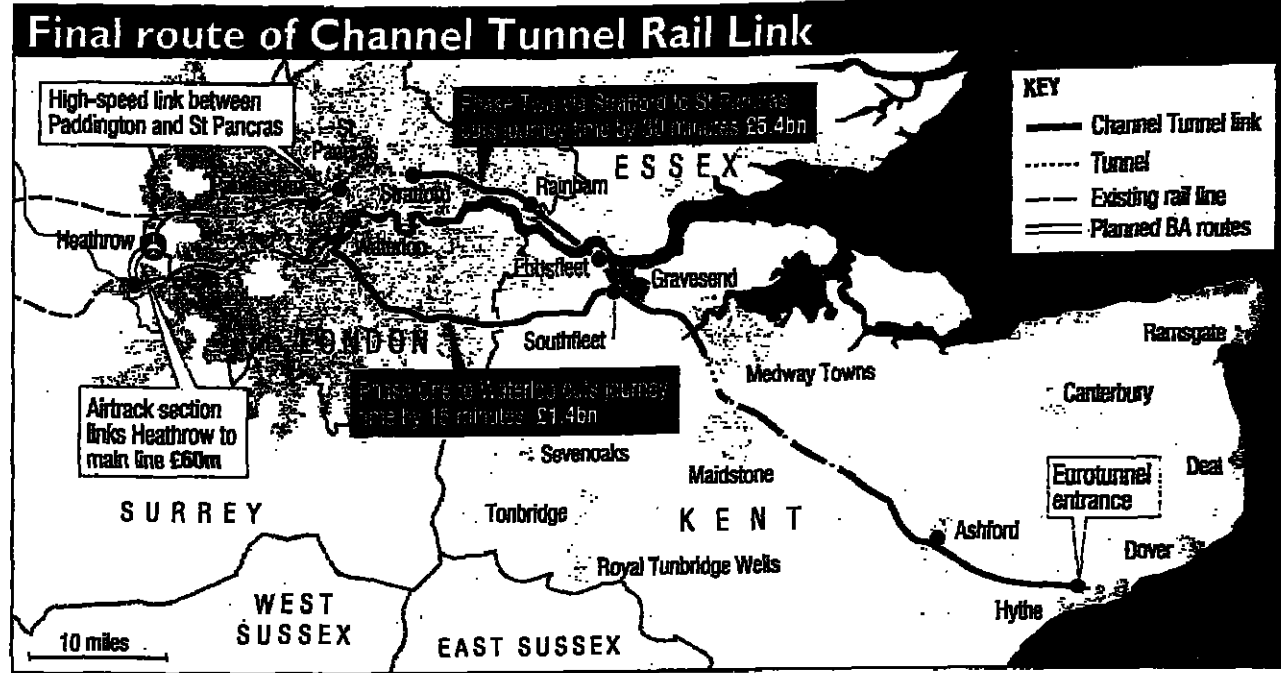
John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, is to meet London and Continental Railways (LCR), the troubled project's sponsor, today to confirm the details before making a statement to MPs.

He is expected to promise that the 68-mile link will be

built to St Pancras in central London, but the Government could not "guarantee" it. The £5bn line is not expected to be completed until 2008 - five years later than its original start date.

Britain has had to watch enviously as its Eurostar partners, France and Belgium, have had trains running at 186mph following the completion of their high-speed links.

Mr Prescott has found another £700m to rescue the project after the link foundered when LCR's original management could not meet their passenger targets and saw ticket



sales dry up. In January, the then management went back to Mr Prescott and asked for an extra £1.2bn to save the line - a request which he rejected.

The decision by the Government marks a rare victory for Bob Ayling, chief executive of British Airways, over Richard Branson - whose winning way

ion the battles between the rival airlines has infuriated BA. Under the ambitious scheme, Railtrack - the owner of nation's rail network - will build the first stage of the link which will join the Channel Tunnel to Ebbsfleet in north

Kent. Until the second stage is completed, trains will continue to go into Waterloo, but will run relatively slowly through the suburbs of south London.

Completing this section will, however, lop 15 minutes of the current trip from London to Paris. Railtrack will pay for this first leg out of its own pocket - a mere £1bn - and recoup the cost through charges to Eurostar.

Ministers say that Eurostar is key to generating the bumper sales to fund the construction of the second phase. It was thought that the consortium headed by BA and National Ex-

press offered more "realistic" projections than Virgin's plans.

The next stage of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link - which will carry trains at high speed north to St Pancras via a new international station at Stratford in east London with connections to the north of England - is a riskier proposition. Although Mr Prescott is prepared to stump up an extra £700m cash - on top of the £1.8bn on offer - no firm commitment has been extracted from the private sector.

Railtrack has an option to build the later, more expensive

sections of the line but does not want to commit itself to the entire £5bn project with no clear idea of how well Eurostar is doing.

The strategy angered organisations lobbying for the whole route to be built. Richard Arthur, deputy chairman of one of the campaigning groups, Fast Tracks, said that more than 100,000 jobs depended on the whole link being built. "We have heard the rumours and would want to see the details of the proposals to make sure they are in line with the Channel Tunnel Act," he said.



Richard Branson's projections were seen as less realistic

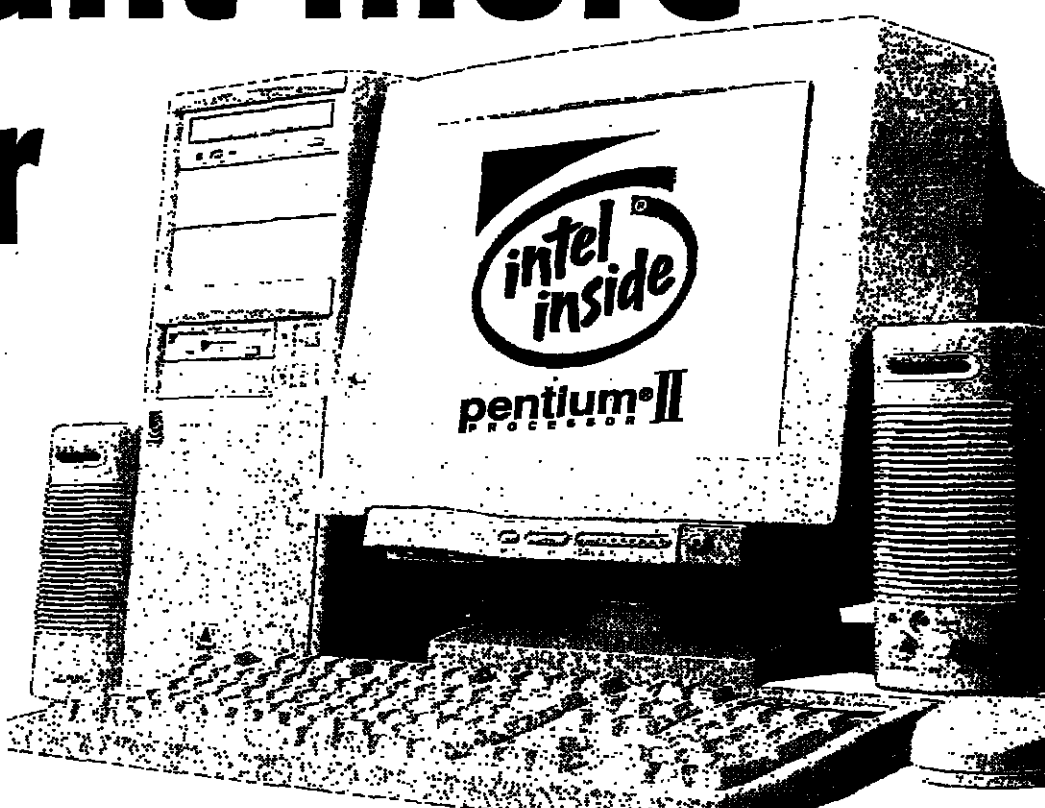
Ministers were keen that after a false start and demands for more taxpayers' money to complete the link, there should be no further hitches in the prestige plan to build a new fast service from the Channel Tunnel across the River Thames to St Pancras.

Mr Prescott supported LCR in going for a bigger consortium with more experience. Sources said that ministers were aware of the rivalry between BA and Branson's airline. However, they stressed that BA was a minority shareholder in the consortium which includes the French rail-

way company, SNCF, and the Belgian national railway, SNCB. BA's plan also involves the new Heathrow Fast Train service which became fully operational this week from Paddington. The airline hopes that this track could be extended to meet international trains at St Pancras.

Experts say that coupled with another innovative scheme - Airtrack, which links the wealthy commuter belt to the west of London to Heathrow - BA's proposals would make the international airport a major transport hub.

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Channel faces 'millennium bug' disaster

By Terry Macalister

THE ENGLISH Channel, the busiest waterway in the world, could become an accident blackspot because the shipping industry has not woken up to the "millennium bug".

Lloyd's Register of Shipping warned last night that there was a "potentially very serious problem" because equipment might fail on 1 January 2000. And union leaders said they feared the worst because the industry had a history of only reacting after a tragedy.

Tim Jones, chief executive of Lloyd's Register, said: "The shipping industry is making a late start ... There could be problems with embedded chips in navigational, propulsion and safety equipment like fire detectors and alarms."

Mark Holford, an executive with Thomas Miller insurers, said: "Ships do not fall out of the sky like aeroplanes. But they may grind to a halt so the likelihood of an accident certainly exists."

Lloyd's and Thomas Miller, which runs UK P & I Club insurance mutual, have developed an Internet web site to try to alert both equipment suppliers and ship-owners of the need to check all their systems.

United States companies are very aware of the problem and United Kingdom companies "quite aware", but Mr Holford said Asian ship owners needed to increase their know-

edge at a time when the freight market for dry cargo vessels had plummeted, leaving many companies with serious financial difficulties. Mr Holford said upgrading systems could cost up to \$20,000 (£12,500) per ship.

Mark Dickinson, assistant general secretary of the International Transport Workers Federation, said: "It took the *Titanic* sinking for the industry to wake up to the fact that it should have enough lifeboats on board. I hope we are not going to be in the same position with the millennium bug."

Allan Graveson, national secretary of the British officers union, Numast, said: "There are good ship-owners and bad ship-owners. The good ones will be proactive and sort out their systems, but the bad ones will ignore everything until a disaster occurs."

The industry has many blue-chip operators like P&O but also hundreds of small, privately owned operators with small cash flows and dubious reputations.

Out of the hundreds of ships that pass through the English Channel every week, many are owned by small companies which could be unaware of the need, or unwilling, to upgrade their vessels.

Ships generally have manual back-up systems but inspections by government officials from Port State Control often reveal that such equipment is not always kept up to standard.

Surgeon weeps at hepatitis hearing

A SURGEON infected with Hepatitis B who fatally infected a patient when he accidentally cut himself with a scalpel during an operation, yesterday broke down as he faced allegations of serious professional misconduct.

Sanjay Ingley was giving evidence to the General Medical Council about the death of Blodwyn Jenkins, 83, who died four months after he carried out her hip replacement operation in July last year.

Mr Ingley, 32, is accused of carrying on with the operation despite the fact that his wound was still bleeding. He is also charged with failing to fill in an accident form to tell the Ysbyty Gwynedd hospital, Bangor, north Wales, about what had happened.

The surgeon found out that he had Hepatitis B only when he arrived in Britain from In-

dia in 1994. Tests revealed he was a low-risk carrier and he was allowed to continue operating.

On 13 July he carried out a hip replacement operation on Mrs Jenkins. At the beginning of the operation, he cut his index finger of his left hand on a scalpel. "I thought saw that I had pricked myself on my finger and there was some blood," he said.

A nurse gave him antiseptic to clean it and he put on a plaster before replacing his glove and continuing. His evidence contradicts that of theatre staff who said on Monday that they saw blood "oozing" from the wound.

The surgeon, who does not face any criminal charges relating to the matter, wept as he said: "I was arrested by police on suspicion of involuntary manslaughter."

The hearing was adjourned until today.

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HER CRIME? 5 MINUTES OF PEACEFUL PROTEST. HER PUNISHMENT? 18 YEARS OF BRUTAL TORTURE.



Ngawang Sangdrol was first arrested at the age of 13. Her "crime" was to take part in a 5-minute demonstration by Buddhist nuns calling for the independence of Tibet. She was detained without trial for 4 months. According to other prisoners, she was badly beaten and subjected to torture by thumb-cuffs. (One arm is placed behind the back, the other over the shoulder, and the thumbs cuffed together.) In 1992, aged 15, Ngawang was again arrested for attempting to stage another

pro-independence demonstration. Or, as the Chinese authorities called it, "incitement to subversive and separatist activities". She was sentenced to 3 years in Lhasa's Drapchi prison. Whilst in jail, she made a tape recording of nationalist songs which was smuggled out of prison and circulated in Tibet. For this, she received another 6 years. In 1996, she failed to stand up when an official entered the room. Whilst undergoing punishment for this, she shouted "Free Tibet". Her sentence was increased by a further 9 years. We hear from former prisoners that Ngawang is regularly tortured. That her hands are permanently damaged from the violent interrogation she underwent when she was first arrested at 13. That she has spent many months of her sentence in a confinement cell with no windows or light. That whilst in solitary confinement she was fed a single bun or dumpling a day. Why are we telling you this? Isn't the world full of people who are imprisoned, beaten and tortured for standing up for their rights?

Yes it is. But it is also full of people who are prepared to stand up on their behalf. This year marks the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. After what you've just read you may not think that there is much cause for celebration. But Amnesty International campaigns relentlessly, all over the world, to defend the Declaration's principles and to gain the release of prisoners of conscience. And it works. Wei Jingsheng was imprisoned for 18 years for expressing anti-government views in Beijing. On his release in December last year, he wrote to thank us for our work on his behalf. His letter ended thus:

"Your work is of enormous value to those suffering from political oppression. It is perhaps more successful than you yourselves have ever realized... please keep the faith." Ngawang Sangdrol is now 21 years old. She has spent 6 years in jail. She has another 12 years to serve. A year is a long time in jail. A month is a long time in darkness. A day is a long time in thumb-cuffs. Do you have the time to fill in the coupon or pick up the phone? You may say yes, I must do something. But please, do it now. Good intentions don't ease the agony of torture.

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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL UNITED KINGDOM

Brown is tempting pay revolt, say unions

By Barrie Clement,
Diane Coyle and Colin Brown

BRITAIN'S biggest civil service union yesterday warned the Chancellor of the Exchequer was heading for an "explosion" among public sector workers if he insisted on keeping his tight grip on state spending.

Reacting to Gordon Brown's confirmation to a TUC delegation yesterday that he was determined to clock up budget surpluses until the next election, Barry Reamsbottom, joint general secretary of the Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS), said that employees' leaders could not "hold the line" indefinitely.

He said there had been a freeze on civil service pay bill for six years and that there were signs of increasing frustration among his members. Recent figures showed that more than 15,000 employees left the civil service over the past year, the highest number since 1991. "That is a warning of trouble to come," said Mr Reamsbottom.

Rodney Bickerstaffe, leader of public service union Unison, who was part of the TUC delegation, said it was "totally unnecessary" to prolong financial stringency.

After an hour-long meeting with the Chancellor, John Monks, TUC general secretary, said that there was no contradiction between Mr Brown's stringent policy and a 3 per cent increase in expenditure on health, education and public transport. "We put our case for increased public expenditure in line with rises in national prosperity," said Mr Monks.

The TUC believes that some Treasury "hawks" want to see the percentage of gross domestic product spent on public services reduced to levels currently seen in the United States.

Even before meeting the TUC, the Chancellor brushed aside union demands for the surplus money to be spent on higher investment in public services, although he left room to target big increases in spending on education and health.

It will mean tightening the screws on other spending departments, including social security and defence, before the

Cabinet agrees the comprehensive spending review next month.

Mr Brown has refused to accept the £500m cut offered by the Secretary of State for Defence, George Robertson, in the £22bn defence budget. The Chancellor has ordered his own team to look for deeper cuts.

Promising that for the rest of this Parliament the Government would borrow only to invest, he assured the City that current spending would be more than covered by tax revenues.

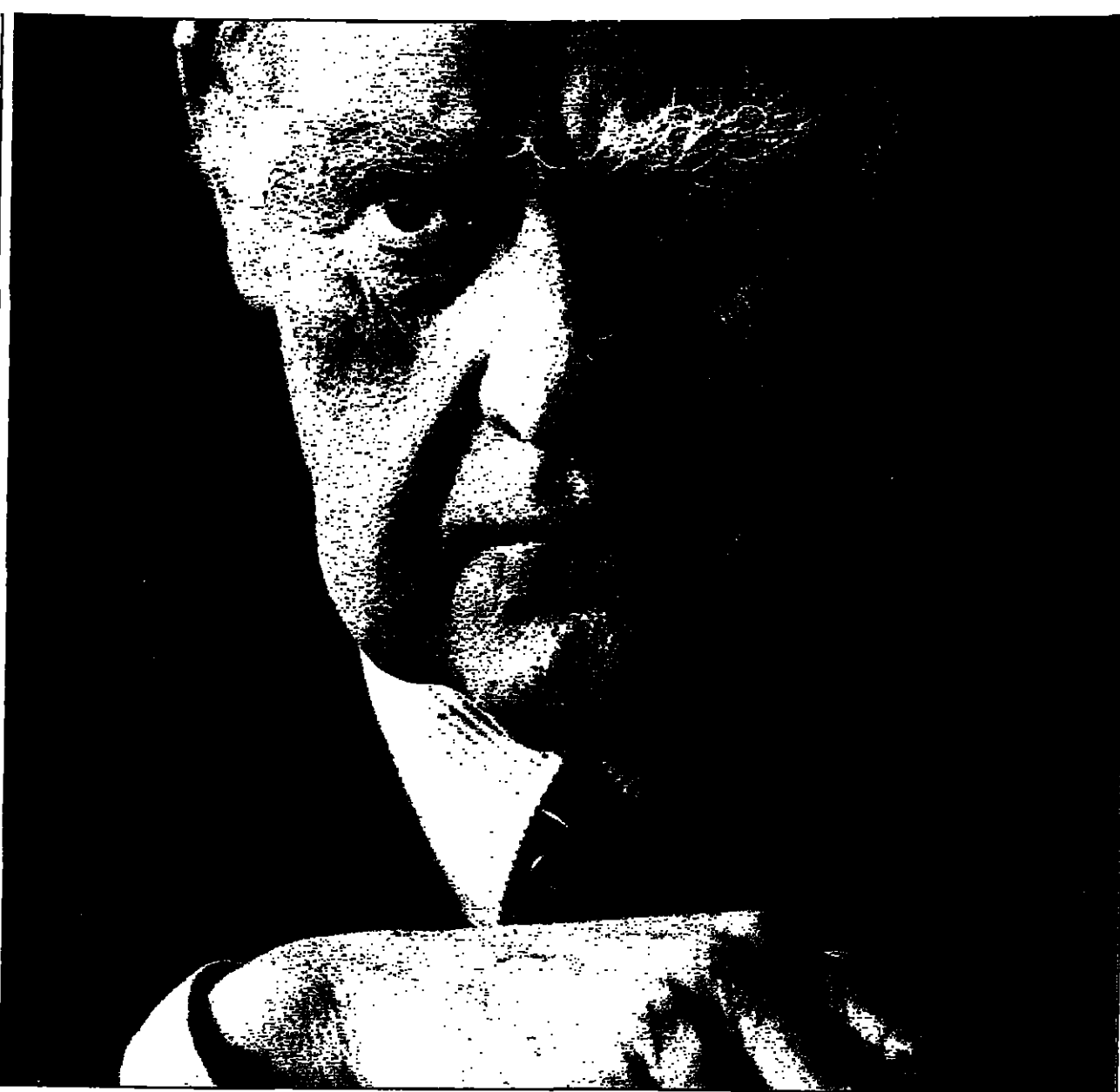
Addressing a conference in London, the Chancellor injected more iron into his reputation by announcing plans for a three-year surplus of tax revenues over the great bulk of public sector expenditure. "Those who said that we would fail to show the necessary discipline in public spending have been proved wrong," he said.

The announcement extends and toughens Mr Brown's pledge to abide by the "golden rule" - that over the course of a business cycle the Government should borrow only to finance investment. This means current spending has to be met from current tax revenues throughout the remaining years of the Parliament.

As the economy is slowing, it is likely to reduce the growth in tax revenues and increase spending pressures. "Whatever the pressures or difficulties, we will not be diverted from these tough rules," Mr Brown said. The Liberal Democrats pounced on the speech as evidence of "fiscal flagellation". Treasury spokesman Edward Davey said: "Given Labour's current problems in delivering on their promises on public services, it is astonishing that Gordon Brown is taking such a restrictive approach - putting the piling up of surplus cash before improvements in health and education."

However, Francis Maude, the new shadow Chancellor, predicted Mr Brown would not be able to stick to his tough promises because of pressures on public sector pay. "Let's see whether he's got the mettle to stick through it," he said.

Leading article, page 20



Bernard Ingham claims Labour has tamed the news instincts of the press

Photograph: David Sandison

Ingham spins tale of disaster

By Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

LABOUR'S spin-doctors will "reap the whirlwind" from selective briefings given to favoured journalists, Margaret Thatcher's former press secretary said yesterday.

Sir Bernard Ingham also said Tony Blair's official spokesman Alastair Campbell was a party political appointee who should not be paid by the taxpayer.

In his nine years with Mrs Thatcher he had never favoured

one news organisation over another, Sir Bernard told a House of Commons inquiry into the Government Information Service.

"Now we have selective briefings all over the place. It must be hotbed of discontent in Whitehall and Westminster in the lobby because indeed there is favouritism which is frightening. I think the Government will reap the whirlwind in consequence of that," he said.

In his day the press had behaved like "baying wolves," he said, but now they had been

tamed by new Labour. "They are like poodles. They seem to have lost their critical faculties for the moment. I think they are beginning to return now," he said. Alastair Campbell was on a "curious contract" where he was sometimes a civil servant and sometimes not.

"He observes the norms and conventions of the civil service except when it is convenient to bash the Tories. In these circumstances he ought not to be paid by the taxpayer. He is a party political appointee and should be paid as such," he said.

Recently Gordon Brown had been dismissed by Alastair Campbell as "psychologically flawed" and other ministers including Gavin Strang, Clare Short, David Clark, Chris Smith and Frank Dobson had been rubbished "hardly before they had got their feet under the table".

"Where is all this coming from? 'We don't know,' we are always being told. I got the blame when I was at Downing Street, but nowadays nobody is responsible for rubbishing ministers."

Devon's termites face £190,000 fighting force

By Anthony Bevins

THE Government declared war on a colony of termites in north Devon last night. Housing Minister Nick Raynsford announced in a Commons reply that a £190,000 programme was being launched in an attempt to exterminate the insects which have infested two houses at Saunton, near Barnstaple.

The programme will take 12 years, but even then, Mr Rayns-

ford added: "It should be stated that it is not possible to be certain of the outcome."

It is thought that the initial infestation took place about four years ago after a householder brought a termite-ridden plant back from holiday in the south of France.

The Government asked the Building Research Establishment to deal with the termites, and working together with the Pest Management Unit of Imperial College, London, the Natural Resources Institute, and the French organisation, CTBA-Biotec, the BRE-led consortium has now come up with a masterplan.

Under the programme, the property will be monitored to within a 500-metre radius of the two houses, and "bait stations" will be set up using an "insect growth regulator" called hexaflumuron.

The theory is that the termites will take the bait and the growth regulator "will prevent the developing insects from maturing".

Mr Raynsford said that if termite "activity" was detected beyond the 500-metre range, the programme "will be extended".

As for the timescale, Mr Raynsford said: "Monitoring will continue for up to ten years after activity has ceased in order to ensure that the treatment has indeed been effective."

SKETCH

Dobson and Doris let battle commence

By Michael Brown

GIRL POWER may be on the wane in pop, but yesterday it made a dramatic and much needed reappearance on the Opposition front bench.

Ann Widdecombe, the newly appointed shadow Health Secretary, certainly spiced up a Tory team which hitherto has given Frank Dobson and his colleagues an easy ride.

The return of Doris Karioff (a moniker she now uses herself) attracted a high attendance on both sides of the chamber, underlining her new status as a political star, probably only one of about six Tories anyone would recognise outside the Commons.

If the Tory reshuffle still has one foot in the past, the Widdecombe promotion promises, on yesterday's evidence, to stick the siletto into Labour's softest spot, its vulnerability on health pledges.

Popular even among Tory MPs for the destruction of her former Home Office boss Michael Howard, she was received warmly by the House because of her undoubted integrity and that redoubtable style, so devoid of any notion of spin-doctoring.

She couldn't wait to get stuck in. But the Speaker, Betty Boothroyd, kept her on tenterhooks as - on three occasions - she tried to launch her bulk at the despatch box. Finally, she got going.

Frank Dobson rose equally well to the occasion. Looking ever more like Grandad from *Only Fools and Horses*, he survived the Widdecombe taunts with a bluff, honest but apologetic approach to the waiting-list saga of broken promises.

Welcoming Ms Widdecombe, he referred to their "matching accessories" and the fact that neither "count as being from the fashionable end of politics".

Indeed, it was a pleasure to see these two old warhorses trading blows. Both believe in old-fashioned thug politics, where punching below the belt is a pleasure.

Like old bull elephants jousting in the jungle, there was a lot of crashing of

branches but little in the way of blood and gore. Both were too seasoned as politicians to be floored by the other. But it was great entertainment, and offered the promise of better to come. This is a show that could run and run.

Mr Dobson reminded us that Ms Widdecombe is the third shadow he has faced. But there can be no doubt that, at last, the Tories have a spokeswoman who will become the centre of attention.

Unlike Labour's female hordes, Ms Widdecombe's attention to dress sense is minimal. But a new hairstyle (if pudding basin can be so described) with a darker than usual shade of black complemented a blue Laura Ashley sack with a well-cut powder blue jacket.

Ms Widdecombe had brought along her pet terrier Alan Duncan to snap, bark and nip the ankles of Mr Dobson's junior ministers. Mr Duncan is, like most terriers, brave and fearless and will, with practice, get under the skin of Labour ministers.

But the new Tory dream team was let down, as ever, by inept support from their own side.

Stephen Day (Cheadle) made a song and dance about Labour placemen on health boards. Mr Dobson reminded him that invitations to MPs to nominate representatives had been sent out but Mr Day "was either too idle or too careless to respond".

Ms Widdecombe slightly spoilt her big day by grumping to the Speaker that two Labour MPs had used their questions to make derogatory references to her hard-line approach as prisons minister - which included support for shackling pregnant women prisoners during labour.

But she should not be ashamed of her fearsome image; neither should she complain.

She should wear as a badge of honour the fact that Labour MPs believe she would willingly sacrifice all their first born.

Michael Brown is the former Tory MP for Brigg and Cleethorpes

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Emergency plan failed in Britain's worst flood

By Louise Jury

BRITAIN's flood warning and defence systems broke down at Easter in the face of the worst conditions seen this century, according to an interim report published yesterday.

An independent inquiry set up after the floods has found serious flaws in the way the Environment Agency dealt with the disaster, which struck central and eastern England and mid-Wales.

But Peter Bye, the inquiry chairman, also blamed a more fundamental problem - the way some local authorities have repeatedly rejected official advice not to build on flood plains.

Announcing his interim findings, Mr Bye said the Environment Agency had a "sturdy framework" of policies and plans to deal with flood warning and defence. But faced with floods as bad as this century's benchmark disaster of 1947, the agency failed to give proper warnings and there was a breakdown of co-operation with other bodies.

"There is evidence in some locations of unsatisfactory forecasting and warning dissemination, apparent slow reaction to events, confusion and misunderstanding amongst the public ... and unsatisfactory liaison between agency staff and emergency services," the report concluded.

It found that some of the agency's maps were "inadequate" for describing flood risk areas and it appeared that fax messages were sent to the wrong numbers during the emergency.

"Greater emphasis should be given in the future to testing response activity, inter-agency co-operation, with extreme event scenarios," said the report.

But Mr Bye, the former chief executive of Suffolk County Council, said blame had to be shared by local authorities which had allowed development on flood plains, against clear advice from the Environment Agency and its predecessor bodies.

Nearly all the caravan sites which were affected by the flooding were opposed at the planning stage, as was, for example, a new leisure centre at Banbury, which was badly hit.

The agency estimated that 10-15 per cent of local authorities gave go-ahead for developments against its advice. Dr Geoff Mance, its water management director, said the problem had to be taken more seriously in future.

"With 4.5 million new homes coming, we need to look for more national innovative thinking in design. We shouldn't always be thinking about flood defences," he said.

The use of materials such as tarmac and concrete increases the rapid run-off of water into rivers, creating problems more quickly than in the past. At Easter, 75mm of rain fell in 36 hours in some areas, the equivalent to six weeks' average rainfall.

Archie Robertson, the Environment Agency's director of operations, said he wanted to reassure the public that it was treating the matter seriously.

It would reassess the trigger points for flood warnings and planned early meetings with emergency services. But he said the work would cost money and that the agency was already underfunded by an estimated £30-£40m a year.

Mr Bye said detailed investigations would be conducted in areas which were particularly badly hit.



Simon Lane pedalling one of his 'trishaws' around Cambridge; he is to fight a judge's decision to impose tax regulations on the popular mode of transport. Photograph: Brian Harris

Freewheeling days at an end for city 'trishaws'

By Linus Gregoriadis

CAMBRIDGE'S colourful, three-wheeled "trishaws", a popular and environmentally friendly form of transport, face being driven out of business after a judge ruled yesterday that they must be bound by

the same regulations as taxis.

Simon Lane, who runs the service, has been told he must pass the Cambridge equivalent of the taxi driver's "knowledge" test if he wishes to continue carrying passengers.

Mr Lane said yesterday that he planned to appeal.

"The battle is lost but the war is still being fought ... They may have the legal power to do this but it doesn't change the fact that it is clearly unreasonable," he added. He also objects to regulations which mean that his drivers must be subject to criminal record

checks and must go for medical tests which cost £85 each. "Students aren't going to do all that for a summer job," he said. "We already have to learn all the university's history."

Mr Justice Richards ruled that the laws for Hackney carriages "apply to the applicant's

trishaws". But Mr Lane's solicitor, Susan Ring, said: "It is an absurdity to compare a trishaw with a motorised taxi."

Mr Lane, now unemployed, has six trishaws and has invested £30,000 in his business. He says he may have to sell the vehicles if he loses the appeal.

Vinnie Jones convicted of assault

By Diana Blamires

THE footballer Vinnie Jones was yesterday found guilty of assault causing actual bodily harm and criminal damage.

Magistrates at St Albans, where he was charged, told how Jones, of Redbourne, Hertfordshire, attacked neighbour Timothy Gear in

November last year. The 33-year-old Queens Park Rangers and Wales star was said to have punched, kicked and bitten Mr Gear, 27, at his mobile home following a row over the removal of a stile that Jones had erected on the edge of his land. Jones, who denied the charges, will be sentenced on 2 July.

After the verdict Jones, left court without commenting. He was driven away with his wife Tanya and agent Nick Davies.

Mr Gear's father, Michael Gear, 53, who helps his son run a riding school at their home in Redbourne, said: "I am very pleased especially for my son and the police. My son is very

relieved. He just wants to get on with his life."

Commenting on the verdict, Ted Oliver, 50, a freelance reporter who was allegedly bitten on the nose by Jones in a Dublin hotel after England's abandoned game against Ireland in February 1996, said: "I am only surprised that it has taken

until now for Vinnie to get himself into serious trouble."

Jones won backing, however, from one of his neighbours in Redbourne. Pauline Baron said: "Vinnie has been nothing but a perfect neighbour. Even when he first moved here he asked us if we minded... The guy has been nothing but a perfect gent."



Jones: Awaiting sentence

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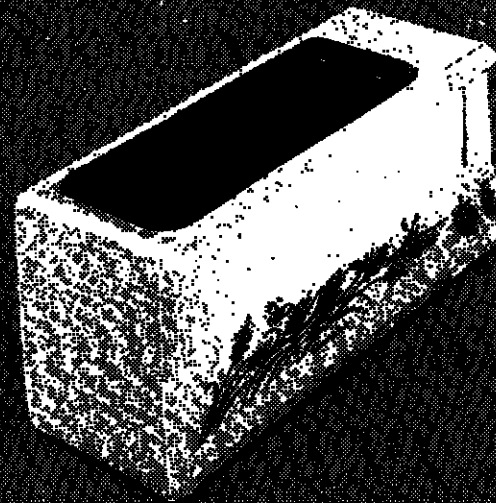
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Landowners bar way to new right to roam



Alan Gaskell and his wife Elsie confront Rupert av de Horst (left), of the Country Landowners' Association, at its headquarters Photograph: Tom Pilton

By Linus Gregoriadis

LANDOWNERS were condemned by rambles yesterday after they rejected calls for a legal right to roam through the open countryside.

The Country Landowners' Association said it backed a system of voluntary deals for opening up estates to the public and allowing walkers more access to thousands of acres of moorland, heath and common.

Ian MacNicol, the CLA's president, said landowners wanted to meet public demand for new rights of way with new "Permanent Paths", and that access would be managed to avoid conflict with wildlife, the environment and farming.

He said: "The Government offers two options: we strongly support the voluntary approach and are totally opposed to the creation of a new statutory right of access. We believe that by using voluntary means, rather than compulsion, we can meet the changing demand for access in the way and in the

places where it is actually wanted."

But Kate Ashbrook, access chief of the Ramblers' Association, said: "The CLA are going full speed back to the past: a past of failure, frustration and missed opportunities. But the Government is looking to the future now and has sought views on how all 4 million acres of mountain, moor, heath, down and common land can be opened up to walkers, subject to commonsense restrictions."

Michael Meacher, the environment minister, who is a keen ramble, has warned farmers and landowners that if voluntary agreements do not work, the Government will introduce new laws forcing them to open up blocked footpaths. The consultation period granted by the Government ends on Friday.

Instead of the public being free to walk where they wish, the CLA's proposals would mean that local authorities would have to negotiate agreement with individual landowners. Mr MacNicol said that its proposals

would cost the taxpayer between £4m and £7m, compared with more than £60m if a statutory right to roam was imposed.

Ms Ashbrook said: "We have 50 years of experience with the landowners' 'big idea' of voluntary agreements between themselves and local authorities. We know, right down to the bottom of our boots, that it has not worked and will not work. The landowners are looking to the past. They have very little new to offer the public or the Government."

Two World War veterans and their wives demonstrated outside the CLA yesterday. John Bunting, 80, from Sheffield, said: "During World War II, I was welcome on the moors while training. After the war, I was thrown off. I trained as an anti-tank gunner on Midhope Moor, in the Pennines near Sheffield. But after the war, when I came home, it was no longer my country. The gamekeeper was the one with the gun. I was the enemy."

Employers to put potential before exams

By Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

GROUND-BREAKING assessment techniques will allow employers to test potential recruits on their ability to learn rather than on past exam results.

But while extra efforts are needed to encourage "under-achievers", employers need to be aware that in the present jobs market the qualified candidate is "king", personnel specialists will be told today.

Too many people are excluded from jobs because the education system has failed them, according to Robert McHenry, chairman of Oxford Psychologists' Press which publishes test papers.

Many employers are being deterred from offering jobs under the Government's flagship New Deal programme because they are unable to see past examination scores. Mr McHenry will tell the Institute of Personnel Development's (IPD) recruitment and selection conference today.

The new "dynamic assessment" methods are aimed at evaluating a candidate's potential, a fact which fits in with the ethos of the New Deal which aims to give a fresh start for unemployed 18- to 24-year-olds, says Dr McHenry.

"Too often tests have been seen as something you do to exclude people. The message we are trying to get across is that tests are about inclusion, not exclusion."

As part of the new techniques being investigated by Dr McHenry and employment agency Reed Personnel Services, young jobless people in Hackney, north London, are being "prompted" in order to answer questions they find difficult. They are not told the answers, but are given clues about the thought processes required and it has been found that test scores are being boosted dramatically.

Dr McHenry says the method attempts to assess their ability to learn. Part of the project will be to find systematic and standard methods of prompting.

"Too often the judgements that have been made about young people by schools, adults and society in general bear little relation to their ability," Dr McHenry will tell IPD delegates.

"These tests may well mark a far better way of assessing people who for one reason or another have been let down by the education system. They aim to look at young people's potential rather than merely how they were judged previously."

However, another institute seminar will hear how those with the requisite exam results are in an increasing position of power. Adrian Lenard, director of the Marketing and Communication Agency, will today urge employers to treat job candidates as they would customers.

"In the bad old days of customer service, it was 'here's the product, if you don't like it, don't buy it'."

"That sort of attitude has largely gone now, but it is still with us in the recruitment process. In today's job market the candidate is king."

"Recruiters have to go out, identify the key messages applicants want to hear, establish what their needs are and then market themselves in a way that meets those needs."

Harmish McRae, page 21

Channel ports alert for Cup hooligans

By Andrew Buncombe

MUCH of the hooliganism expected to take place during the World Cup could break out on route to the matches rather than at the games themselves, police said yesterday.

With security at the stadiums likely to be very tight, police believe service stations along the French autoroutes and other stopping-off points could be the flashpoints where violence breaks out.

With the first game of France 98 just a week away, the British authorities have stressed they are doing all they can to prevent the hard-core of troublemakers even getting across the Channel.

Yesterday, the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, announced that the number of restriction orders placed against suspected hooligans had risen to 65. The orders require the person to report to a police station during the matches or face up to six months' imprisonment. He also announced new bilateral arrangements with the French

under which anyone convicted of a football-related offence in France can be put in front of magistrates on their return to Britain.

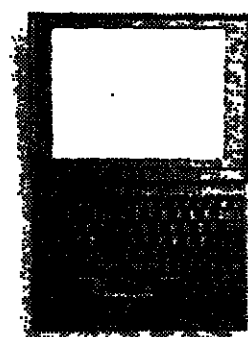
From next Monday, specialist football intelligence officers will mount a round-the-clock watch at all of Britain's ports and airports to try and identify known troublemakers and prevent them travelling to France.

"We will provide the French with the very best intelligence we can to help disrupt the activities of any British football hooligans," said Inspector Peter Chapman, head of the National Criminal Intelligence Service's football unit.

"The French have identified that many of the problems could take place at motorway service stations," he added.

The large, open-air screens which will broadcast the matches live in the cities where games are taking place - and where alcohol is likely to be sold - have also been identified as likely trouble-spots.

Airline strikes, page 16



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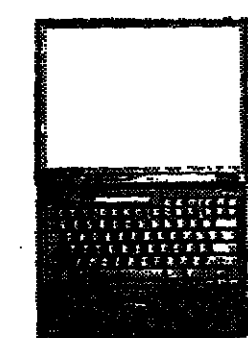
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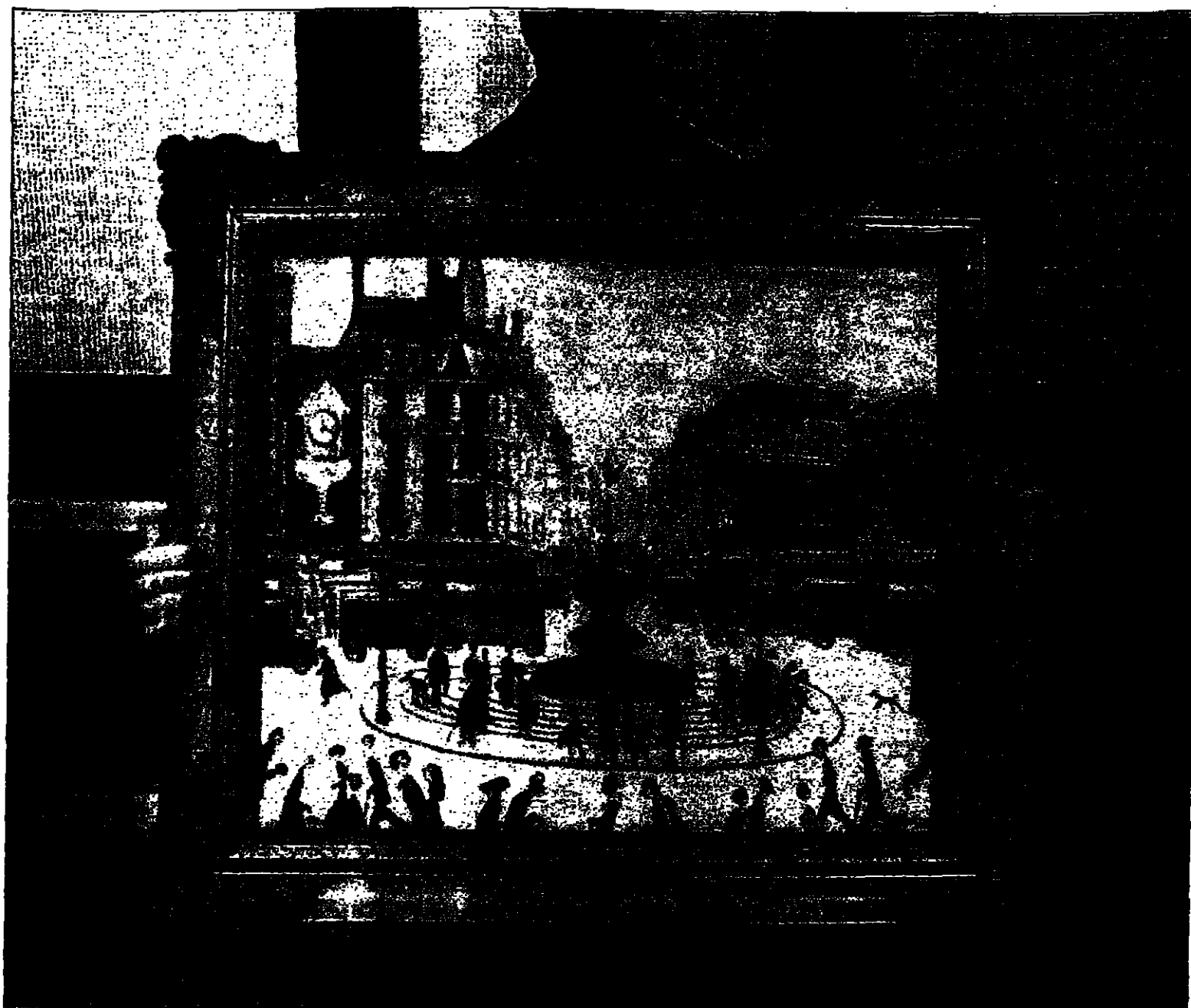
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LS Lowry's *Piccadilly Circus* (1959), one of a handful of views of the capital by the artist celebrated for his views of industrial life in north-west England. It has never been exhibited or published before and is to be auctioned at Phillips, in London, next Tuesday. Photograph: Tom Pilsdon

Lawrence inquiry murder suspects refused legal aid

FOUR of the five men mounting a legal bid to avoid being forced to answer questions about the murder of the black teenager Stephen Lawrence have been refused legal aid, it was confirmed yesterday.

The fifth man has not yet applied for legal aid for a judicial review of his summons to give evidence next week to the inquiry investigating Stephen's murder, the Legal Aid Board said. "So far we have received four formal applications and all four have been refused," a board spokeswoman said.

"One of those four is appealing against the decision."

The five men - David Norris, 21, Neil Acourt, 22, his brother Jamie, 21, Luke Knight, 20, and Gary Dobson, 22 - have all at various times been charged with Stephen's murder. Neil Acourt, Mr Dobson and Mr Knight were acquitted at the Old Bailey in 1996. The charges against Jamie Acourt and Mr Norris never came to court.

The five have been summoned to appear on Monday before the public inquiry investigating the murder and the police response to it.

Last month, lawyers for the

five announced they would ask a judge to rule the summonses unlawful. They said they would seek a ruling that either the terms of reference of the inquiry are too broad and therefore unlawful, or that the questions due to be put to the men go beyond those terms of reference.

The men are understood to object to proposed questions about their activities before the April 1993 murder. The inquiry was set up to look at "matters arising" from Stephen's death.

Stephen, an 18-year-old student, was stabbed to death at a south London bus stop in what an inquest jury decided was a "completely unprovoked racist attack by five white youths".

The Legal Aid Board spokeswoman refused to say why the applications had been refused. But she added that decisions to grant legal aid are based on a means test and a merits test - whether there are "reasonable prospects of success and whether it is reasonable in all circumstances to grant legal aid".

At the continuing inquiry into Stephen's murder, the senior detective who supervised the investigation yesterday de-

nied being corrupt. Detective Chief Superintendent William Isles responded angrily to questions over the failure promptly to use a tip-off about the murder from an informant.

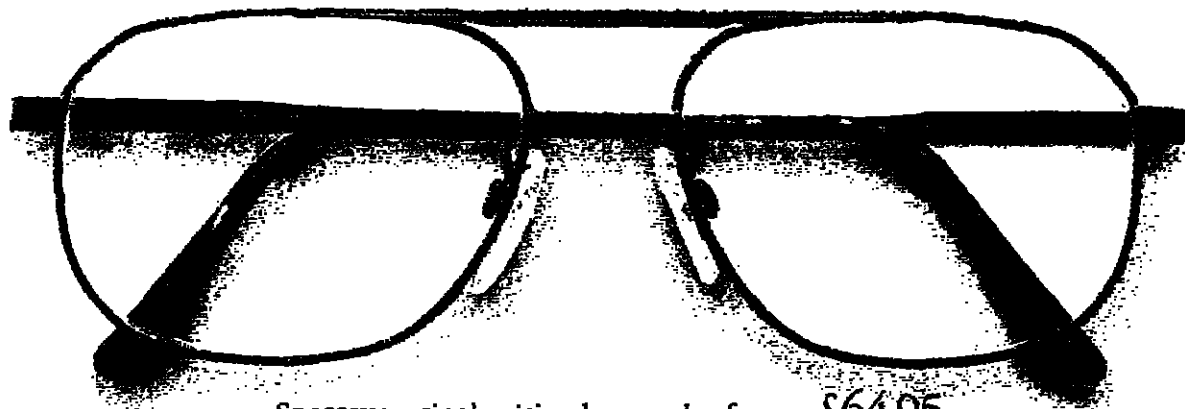
The informant, known as James Grant, told police on the day after the attack about an eye-witness to the stabbing. The inquiry was told that Mr Isles, who was then in charge of south-east London CID but has since retired, failed to approve a request to pay Mr Grant £50 for his information.

Michael Mansfield QC, for the Lawrence family, told Mr Isles: "I'm going to suggest there is only one inference because of your lack of action and information, Mr Isles."

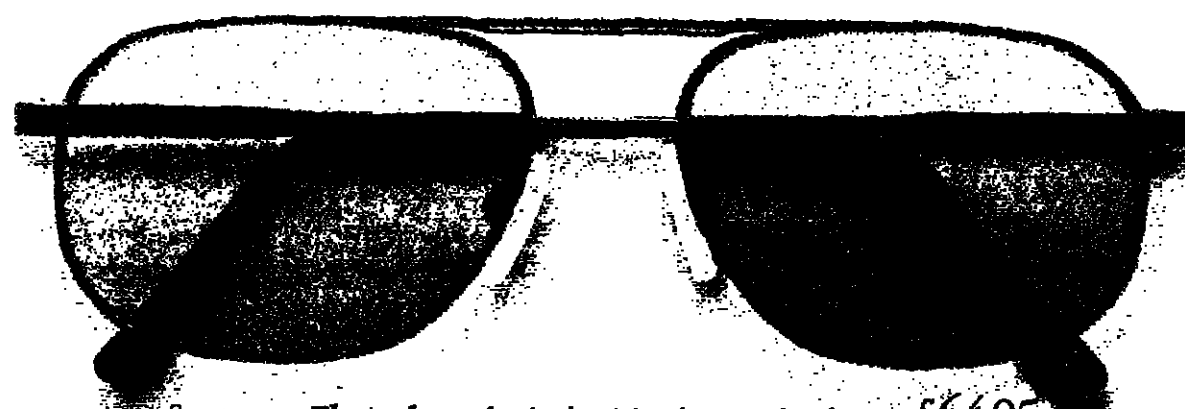
The former policeman raised his voice as he replied: "What are you saying sir? Are you saying I am corrupt?"

Mr Isles later asked Mr Mansfield: "Do you honestly believe that we didn't want to have these people found guilty of murder? Do you honestly believe that we would take money so that people would get away with the most evil murder that could have happened?" The inquiry continues.

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DAILY POEM

Two Rains

By Les Murray

*Our farm is in the patched blue overlap
between Queensland rain and Victorian rain
(and of two-faced droughts like a dustbowl tap).*

*The southerly rain is skimmed and curled
off the Roaring Forties' circuit of the world.
It is our chased Victorian silver*

*and makes wintry asphalt hurry on the spot
or pauses to a vague speed in the air;
whereas, lightning-brewed in a vast coral pot*

*the tropical weather disgorges its lot
in days of enveloping floodtime blast
towering and warm as a Papuan forest,*

*a rain you can sweat in, it steams in the sun
like a hard-ridden horse, while southern rain's absorbed
like a cool, fake-colloquial, drawn out lesson.*

Our poems this week celebrate the publication of Les Murray's *Collected Poems* by Carcanet Press (£12.95). Born on a New South Wales farm in 1938, Les Murray has been a full-time writer since 1971; in 1996, he won the TS Eliot Prize. This poem first appeared in *Dog Fox Field* (1990).

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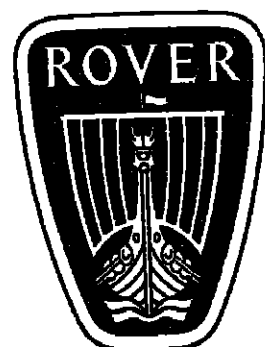
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Indonesians live in fear of new wave of unrest

By Richard Lloyd Parry
in Jakarta

AT THE weekend, he made his first discreet public appearance, during prayers at a Jakarta mosque. His half-brother reported a few days ago that he was in good spirits, and he appears to be still living in the modest luxury of his family home.

Since his sudden resignation two weeks ago tomorrow, almost nothing has been heard from him and whether he is happy, sad, bitter, or resigned, nobody really knows. But as he surveys the country that he left behind, Mr Suharto, the former president of Indonesia, may find himself registering a surprising emotion: relief.

Yesterday came the latest indications that if things in Indonesia were bad when Mr Suharto quit, they are rapidly becoming much worse. By the

government's own reckoning, unemployment will rise this year to more than 15 million – 17 per cent of the work force. The economy will shrink by 10 per cent, and inflation is predicted to hit 85 per cent or more.

Thanks to Mr Suharto's neglect and his stubbornness, Indonesia, which was once a leader among the developing nations, is slipping into a state of poverty, hunger and social collapse. On the streets of Jakarta, there are growing numbers of beggars. The tigers in West Java's biggest safari park are being fed only half the week, and in parts of the countryside, the human population is surviving on roots not rice.

The population minister, Ida Bagus Oka, yesterday voiced fears of an imminent baby boom. There was a simple reason. The price of condoms has doubled recently in the world's fourth biggest na-

tion, which already has a population of 202 million.

But the gravest concerns are of further political and social unrest. If the economic crisis of last month could stir up a popular uprising against Mr Suharto – whose power had been consolidated over 30 years – what effect will an even worse situation have on the hesitant government of his successor, BJ Habibie?

Mr Suharto's resignation a fortnight ago was unquestionably a turning point. But with every day it becomes clearer that many perils lie along the way of recovery from dictatorship. Since succeeding to the presidency, the former vice-president has exceeded low expectations. He has promised free elections next year and, yesterday, formally recognised Indonesia's biggest trade union, whose founder was released from jail last week.

The political discontent

which forced Mr Suharto out of office has been defused, but not completely eased by Mr Habibie's succession. Yesterday, as is now usual, students demonstrated outside the parliament calling for immediate elections. Mr Habibie's image as a lifelong creature of Suharto gives him little credibility as a reformer and however deftly he negotiates the political currents, he still risks being swamped by the tidal wave of economic disaster.

The International Monetary Fund, which suspended its \$40bn (£25bn) package to Indonesia after Mr Suharto's fall, is expected to reschedule it soon. However, the economic assumptions on which the IMF based its calculations have all had to be revised, as riots, political turmoil and the flight of the persecuted Chinese population have all undermined already dismal levels of confidence.



Students outside the US embassy in Jakarta yesterday protesting that the US is delaying the IMF loan Photograph: AP



UN appeals for earthquake aid

ABAD, Afghanistan (Reuters)

The United Nations issued an urgent appeal yesterday for helicopters and fuel to tackle the destruction of an earthquake which killed thousands. "We call upon everyone and anyone who can provide us with helicopters to do so now," said Alfredo Witschi-Cestari, the UN Coordinator for Afghanistan.

The UN said distribution of food and shelter materials was being held up because the three helicopters now in use were ferrying the injured from remote villages to medical centres.

The death toll has been climbing steadily since the 6.9-magnitude quake struck northern Afghanistan on Saturday, triggering landslides that swallowed entire villages.

Thousands of people remain missing. The devastation hit a region that is home to more than 70,000 peoples.

"For the time being, we have two helicopters in there," said Juan Fortes Guillen, a Red Cross spokesman, in neighbouring Pakistan. "We have already started to establish priorities, carrying out medical evacuations and treating the wounded at the sites."

The Red Cross and the United Nations ferried in tons of supplies yesterday – most of them to provide emergency shelter. Up to 80 villages have been estimated to be heavily damaged, and another dozen obliterated.

The Red Cross and the UN set up mobile medical units in Shari Basurkh, 30 miles from Faizabad, capital of the northern Badkshshan province. This northern province bore the brunt of the disaster.

Germany said it will give DM500,000 (£171,000) to support efforts by the Red Cross and other relief organisations. France was sending around 35 tons of aid to nearby Dushanbe, in neighbouring Tajikistan, to be transported to the disaster area.

Japan, the European Union and the Netherlands are also sending assistance. Among the hardest-hit areas was Rostaq, site of an earthquake on 4 February that killed as many as 2,300 people. Some reports said another 1,000 people died in Saturday's quake.

There were reports of heavy fighting between the Taliban religious army, which controls most of Afghanistan, and an opposition alliance which holds territory west of the region which was hit by the quake.

IN BRIEF

New chief for papal guard

THE POPE has appointed Swiss the army colonel Pius Segmuller as commander of the Vatican's Swiss Guard, the elite force responsible for the pontiff's security. Lt Elmar Theodor Mader, 34, was appointed deputy commander.

Col Segmuller, 46, succeeds Alois Estermann, who was shot dead by a guardsman shortly after his nomination on 4 May. In the first murders to take place within the Vatican walls for centuries, the guardsman, Cedric Tornay, killed Cdr Estermann and his wife before turning the gun on himself.

— Anne Hanley, Rome

Greek women called to arms

FEARING its declining birth rate will put it at a military disadvantage to Turkey, Greece has decided to train its women in the arts of war. The government yesterday proposed that women from 18 to 60 train and serve in civil defence units for four days a year. Greece currently has 168,000 men and women under arms, compared to 639,000 for Turkey. — AP, Athens

Luzhkov rules out top job

THE mayor of Moscow, Yuri Luzhkov, said yesterday that he has no plans to run for the Russian presidency. Mr Luzhkov was widely considered to be a leading contender to replace Boris Yeltsin in the next presidential election in 2000. — AP, Moscow

Fury over Hitler in crisp ad

ISRAELI diplomats held firm yesterday that commercials using images of Hitler to sell potato crisps should be pulled off Thai television and an apology is not enough.

Leo Burnett Bangkok, the Thai branch of the Chicago-based ad agency, has apologised for producing the adverts which depict Hitler giving a Nazi salute and cuts to a woman who casts a voodoo spell on him as he eats the crisps, hoping to change his evil ways.

— AP, Bangkok

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Money fails to talk in the race to run California

By Andrew Marshall
in Washington

CALIFORNIA usually sets the tone for American politics. The evidence from the welter of primary elections which the state was holding last night is that this year's elections are about something nice and simple: cold, hard cash.

The primaries will select candidates for the general elections in November, when many governors, one-third of Senators and the whole of the House of Representatives will be elected across America. Seven other states as well as California were voting last night.

These contests will be minutely examined for what they tell about the balance of power two years from a presidential election. But the main theme is non-partisan - the power, and limits, of money.

Money has been pivotal to the primary race for Governor, with three Democrats competing for the nomination and one Republican.

Al Checchi, former co-chairman of Northwest Airlines, spent more than \$30m (£18m) promoting himself. Yet he looks set to trail Gray Davies, California's Lieutenant Governor, who spent a mere \$12m.

Congresswoman Jane Harman, the wife of a wealthy stereo-equipment maker, unloaded \$30m, and much good did it do her. The victor will face Republican Dan Lungren in the fight to replace Governor Pete Wilson, also a Republican.

Since the more monied candidates have not done well, the lesson which much of America's mainstream media has drawn is that money doesn't matter. That seems quixotic.

The California race has been consumed by dollars, with millions frittered away on the gubernatorial race and other contests for national and local office. As much as \$100m has

been spent, equivalent to the sums normally expended in a presidential election.

Darrell Issa, a car-alarm millionaire, spent about \$8m in an effort to win the Republican nomination to contest one of the state's Senate seats. He was trailing state treasurer Matt Fong, but that also had something to do with embarrassing stories that came out about Mr Issa.



Primary runners: Al Checchi (top) and Dan Lungren

such as his arrest for car theft (the charge was dismissed). Mr Fong looked likely to win, and could well unseat incumbent Democrat Barbara Boxer.

Cash has become so important partly because the primaries are open. That means voters of any affiliation can decide who will be the Democrat or Republican nominee, so candidates have sought to appeal to as wide a constituency as possible. Television has been the key weapon.

The primaries certainly open up the question of what money can and cannot do. With the economy booming and few serious problems on the horizon, voters seemed to prefer experience and known faces to rich outsiders.

Mr Davies, for instance, ran under the rubric of "Experience money can't buy". But the fact that money does not always win does not mean it isn't important - Checchi might well not have figured at all without his \$30m.

Cash is also at the centre of one of California's ballot propositions, which seeks to require unions to get the permission of members before spending cash on politics. Proposition 226 has sparked the ire of the union movement, which has spent \$15m to combat it. It looked uncertain last night whether the measure would pass.

Money will dominate the rest of the year, as candidates prepare for the November election. Although this is an off-year election, there is a chance that control of the House of Representatives could slip from the grasp of the Republicans. There are also a number of hard-fought Senate and gubernatorial races in prospect. Money and television will be at a premium, something that concerns many.

New donors keep emerging to fuel the campaign fires. The latest is Bill Gates, and Microsoft, who, after staying away from the political fray for years, has suddenly become a big-money donor to the Republicans. It may be coincidence that this comes as the (Democrat) administration takes on Microsoft in a high-profile anti-trust case.

Money has long been the weakest point of the American political system, opening it up to a variety of forms of legalised corruption. Congress is currently examining a flood of campaign finance measures, but none of them seems likely to succeed: not this year, of all years.



Ohio Senator John Glenn, 77, the first American to orbit the Earth in 1962, in training at the Nasa Johnson Space Center in Houston in preparation for his planned space shuttle journey in October Photograph: AFP

Victim of crash can sue TV show

By David Osborne
in New York

IN A case that could chill media freedoms across America, a Californian woman has won the right to sue a television company that secretly taped her as she asked to be allowed to die in a car crash eight years ago.

The State Supreme Court in California ruled that Ruth Shulman, who survived but is now a paraplegic, is entitled to pursue in court a production company owned by the CBS network for featuring scenes from the car crash in a now defunct series called: *On Scene: Emergency Response*.

Ms Shulman, 54, was in hospital recovering from her injuries, several months after the accident, when she saw herself in the show.

Included was footage of her pleading with a nurse to be left alone to die. Unknown to her, the nurse was wearing a concealed microphone supplied by the television producers.

The court decision, limited in scope initially to cases within California, will worry the US television industry, which has seen a proliferation of so-called "Reality-TV" shows, including those depicting emergency responses to fires, crashes and police raids.

It could equally have consequences for news documentary and magazine programmes which have discovered the power of hidden-camera techniques to expose scams and their perpetrators.

The court justices specifically upheld the right of media organisations, enshrined in the First Amendment to the Constitution, to pursue individuals deemed to be part of a "newsworthy" story. They drew the line, however, at methods that could be considered "offensive intrusions".

It said: "The state may not intrude into the proper sphere of the news media to dictate what they should publish and broadcast, but neither may the media play tyrant to the people by unlawfully spying on them in the name of newsgathering."

Lee Levine, a lawyer for numerous news organisations that had filed briefs to the court in the case, welcomed the court's upholding of the First Amendment, but said that the remainder would have a "chilling effect on the use of reporting techniques".

"The uncertainty is going to have some effect, making the media more cautious than may be ought to be," he said.

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Gucci murder trial closes in on 'Black Widow'



By Anne Hanley
in Rome

UNTIL yesterday, the only mystery still to be solved in the open-and-shut case of the murder of Maurizio Gucci in 1995 was how deeply his ex-wife Patrizia Reggiani – nicknamed the Black Widow – was involved.

But a spontaneous confession to a Milan court by the small-time criminal who chauffeured Gucci's killer to the leatherwear magnate's office on the fatal morning has turned the trial upside down.

Benedetto Ceraulo, who has spent 18 months behind bars charged with pulling the trigger, was not the murderer, said driver Orazio Cicala in his testimony. The real killer is still at large and, if Mr Cicala has his way, will remain so: "I'm naming no names," he told the court. "I've got a wife and family to protect."

Mr Cicala's confession left both prosecution and defence gasping on the first day that all those accused of involvement in



Gucci's murder were present in the court room.

Ms Reggiani sobbed and coughed through the ordeal, her former best friend Giuseppina Auremma remained impassive, as did Ivano Stavioni, the man whom Ms Auremma allegedly contacted to arrange for Gucci's removal. If Ceraulo allowed himself a smirk of relief no one noticed.

All eyes were on Ms Reggiani who, since her arrest in

January last year, has insisted her well-publicised hatred of her former spouse was never intended to end in bloodshed.

And if she told all and sundry that she would like to see Maurizio dead, it was no more than a way of verbalising her resentment over Gucci's high-handed treatment of herself and their two daughters, Ms Reggiani wrote in a memorandum sent to judges last month.

According to that account, Ms Reggiani never dreamed anyone would take her at her word. According to Mr Cicala, Gucci's ex-wife made very sure her wishes came true.

"Stavioni and Ms Reggiani came to my house, and she promised me lots of money even if things went badly," he told the court.

Mr Cicala said he hesitated at first, mulling over the possibility of recording a conversation with Ms Reggiani and using it to extort money from Gucci.

But Mr Cicala had loan-sharks breathing down his neck, and Ms Reggiani came up with the money quickly. "I met her a while later in the Jamaica bar in Milan. She asked me to speed things up," he said.

Shortly afterwards Ms Auremma phoned to inform him that it was time for action: "The parcel has arrived," she announced.

The next day, at 8.35am, Gucci was hit by four bullets as he entered his office in central Milan. The killer, whom no one saw clearly, made off in a car which has never been found.

It was months before investigators' suspicions homed in on Ms Reggiani. The Guccis, famous for their truculence, were not short of enemies.

Initial inquiries focused on Maurizio's dodgy business dealings since selling off his 50 per cent stake in the family luxury leather goods family in 1993.

Ms Reggiani's possible motives for wanting her husband killed were numerous: in 1992 she had had a massive brain tumour removed in an operation which left her prone to epileptic fits and periods of memory loss; her husband was highly unsympathetic throughout her illness, she has said.

Then in 1994, the Guccis went through an acrimonious divorce, after which he neglected his daughters. At the time of his murder, Gucci was reportedly about to marry his companion, Paola Franchi, in a development Ms Reggiani feared would deprive their daughters of their inheritance.

Ms Reggiani's lawyer, Giovanni Maria Dedola, has argued that there is an abyss between saying you would like to see your ex-husband dead and actually ordering his murder.

Moreover, he added, "my client is a seriously ill woman, and quite incapable of making such a dreadful decision".

After Mr Cicala's confession, he will have a much harder time proving his case.

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French pilots win new offer

By John Lichfield
in Paris

THE FRENCH government opened its wallet yesterday in an attempt to end the strike by Air France pilots, which threatens to disrupt travel to the football World Cup next week.

As negotiations between the airlines and pilots' unions resumed after four days of deadlock, the transport minister, Jean-Claude Gayssot, told a boisterous French parliament he was considering "additional" measures to help the state-owned airline.

According to *Le Monde*, this could take the form of temporary exemptions, or reductions, on employment contributions. At the same time, the airline has let it be known that it is prepared to soften its demands for a 15 per cent cut in pilots' wages over three years.

More than 80 per cent of internal and foreign flights by Air France flights were cancelled yesterday, a slight improvement on the first day of the strike.

The French media, of both right and left, has condemned the pilots' action as a gratuitous blot on the modern, forward-looking image which France hoped to project during the World Cup. As the negotiations

continued last night, however, it appeared to be the government and the airline which were preparing to bail out.

Air France has demanded a 15 per cent cut in pilots' salaries to improve its competitiveness and assist the company's partial privatisation this autumn.

In return, management has offered the pilots shares in the part-floated company. The pilots' unions have said they could only accept this offer if they were able to claw back the wage cuts in the next few years.

The director-general of Air France, Pierre-Henri Gourgeon, said such a demand was not "necessarily an obstacle" to negotiation.

Pilots who preferred not to take the shares would have their salaries frozen at present levels. This would leave the airline short of its stated aim of reducing its pilots' wage bill by £50m a year.

Mr Gayssot, a Communist and former transport union leader, told the National Assembly the whole burden of savings should not necessarily fall on the pilots.

The government would consider "additional" ways of helping Air France. Subsidies, in the form of tax breaks, may, however, fall foul of EU competition law.

Kosovo refugee alert

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (AP) – International aid organisations yesterday warned that thousands of Albanians were fleeing the upsurge of violence in Serbia's Kosovo province.

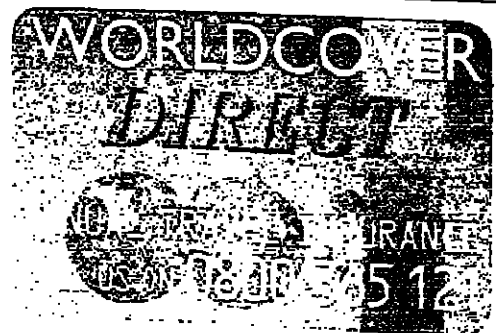
All communications with western Kosovo, where Serb forces have intensified their campaign to wipe out ethnic Albanian separatists, remained cut off yesterday.

The Serbs say their forces in western Kosovo are fighting guerrillas, who want Kosovo to be independent from Serbia. Refugees interviewed in Albania

said they fled massive shelling by Serbian forces. They spoke of some 1,500 massed in the village of Junik.

Some 2,000 people from Kosovo crossed into northern Albania on Sunday and Monday. Thousands more have been displaced in the province itself, Kris Janowski, of the UN High Commission for Refugees, said in Geneva.

Virtually the entire Albanian population of the Kosovo border villages of Junik and Decane fled under the attack, he said.



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Carrots and the schtick

A new orchestral tribute to Bugs Bunny has amused and impressed the man who brought the rascally rabbit to the silver screen. By Charlotte O'Sullivan

BUGS BUNNY – the most cynical, world-weary cartoon character of them all. How fitting that the man who helped create him, Chuck Jones, should have a few doubts about life himself. Asked what he considers the most important mistake of the human race, the 85-year-old animator responds: "Getting born."

The reason I'm talking to Jones (by phone, sadly – he is not well at the moment) is a new show on the South Bank, *Bugs Bunny On Broadway*. Tonight and tomorrow, a selection of Warner Brothers' shorts (fourteen in all, including *What's Up Doc?*, *The Rabbit of Seville* and *One Froggy Evening*) will be accompanied by the Royal Festival Orchestra.

Deliriously hyperactive, dizzily self-effusive, what all these cartoons share is a view of humanity as obsessive, self-effacing and absurd. Where did all this manic gloom spring from? Jones grew up in Hollywood, the land of sunshine and schmoozing. His home life, however, was very different. All the family had to bring back to the breakfast table because his mother demanded silence.

"My father used to say, 'It's hard enough to wake up and face the day without people babbling at you'."

So, as well as doodling in every spare moment, Jones took to books. At the age of four, he discovered *Uncle Wiggly*. What he wanted to find, he quickly tells me, was follow-up to the kids' book *Uncle Wiggly*. I tell him that anecdote sounds too good to be true, the perfect Jones-style collision of high and low culture, but he swears that's not how it happened. He wheezes with pleasure. "Well, I didn't get any place with *Uncle Wiggly*. I was just insulted they wrote something I couldn't understand."

The books he did manage to get some place with were those written by Dorothy Parker ("I've read everything by her") and Mark Twain. "I was raised on Twain," recalls Jones, suddenly earnest. His two favourite books of Twain are *A Tramp Abroad* and *Roughing It*. I say I've never read either book and Jones gasps in error: "Oh, they've got them in Tottenham Court Road, I've seen them there!" What a great image – one legend poring over another in a noisy corner of London.

But what is it he so likes about Twain? He was funny, but he never let anything escape unscathed. Someone asked Twain about the Jews once – anti-semitism was rampant at that time – and he said, "They are members of the human race – worse than I can say of no one."

Jones cracks up chestily. Not surprisingly, when Jones joined the Leon Schlesinger Studio (later sold to Warner Brothers) in 1936, Twain's magic lifted into the cinema. One of Jones' inventions – the Road Runner & Wile E. Coyote partnership – was particularly indebted. "In the fourth chapter of *Roughing It*, says Jones reverentially, which I read when I was seven years old, here's the character and the chase I used to see as Coyote."



Chuck Jones, the driving force behind Bugs Bunny, credits the works of Mark Twain for much of his inspiration

Photograph: Dean Diaz



Did the Warner Brothers' heads appreciate such la-di-da cross-fertilisation? "The bosses weren't paying attention," says Jones. "They didn't give a damn what we did because the major studios who wanted features had to take the shorts."

Things changed when the animation unit was closed down in 1953 (Jack Warner thought the craze for 3D would kill the cartoon star). Moving to Disney Studios, Jones was dismayed to discover that "Walt wanted total control". Jones couldn't bear it: "Walt couldn't even draw and some very bad pictures were put out." After only four months, he snuck back to Warners, which was just being re-opened.

These days, Jones is a sacred being. The establishment has him clasped tightly to its bosom (he has received two Academy Awards, including an honorary Oscar in 1996 and has a unique, 10-year contract with Warner, signed on his 82nd birthday). But he's aware his misanthropic tendencies, his instinctive distaste for authority, could have cost him such popularity.

When I ask about the grisly *Chow Hound*, for instance, (which has a bulldog destroyed by the cat and mouse he has cruelly oppressed) Jones chortles, "That's a black one, all right. If all my cartoons had been that dark I'd have wound up more like

Robert Crumb or those Finnish boys I love, the Brothers Quay."

Indeed, far from playing the grand old man, there's something of the sweet, libidinous nerd about Jones. When I'm first put through to him, he cries gleefully: "A girl! I'm always fascinated by girls!"

Later, I mention Crumb's confession that he had a crush on Bugs Bunny, half expecting Jones to rush to Bug's chastisement. Instead, he giggles. "Sure. Bugs is a sex object. He isn't just funny or cute. Why would you be attracted to something if sex wasn't involved?"

Jones was also delighted that there were "very few children" when he went to see the show in New York. He's always had his grown-up fans, of course, Peter Bogdanovich and Ray Bradbury among them, but now a wider cross-section will be able to re-appreciate his work.

Just as his hero, Twain, is now remembered primarily for Huckleberry Finn, Charles M. Jones is best known for Bugs. Lazy minds associate both characters with the innocence of childhood.

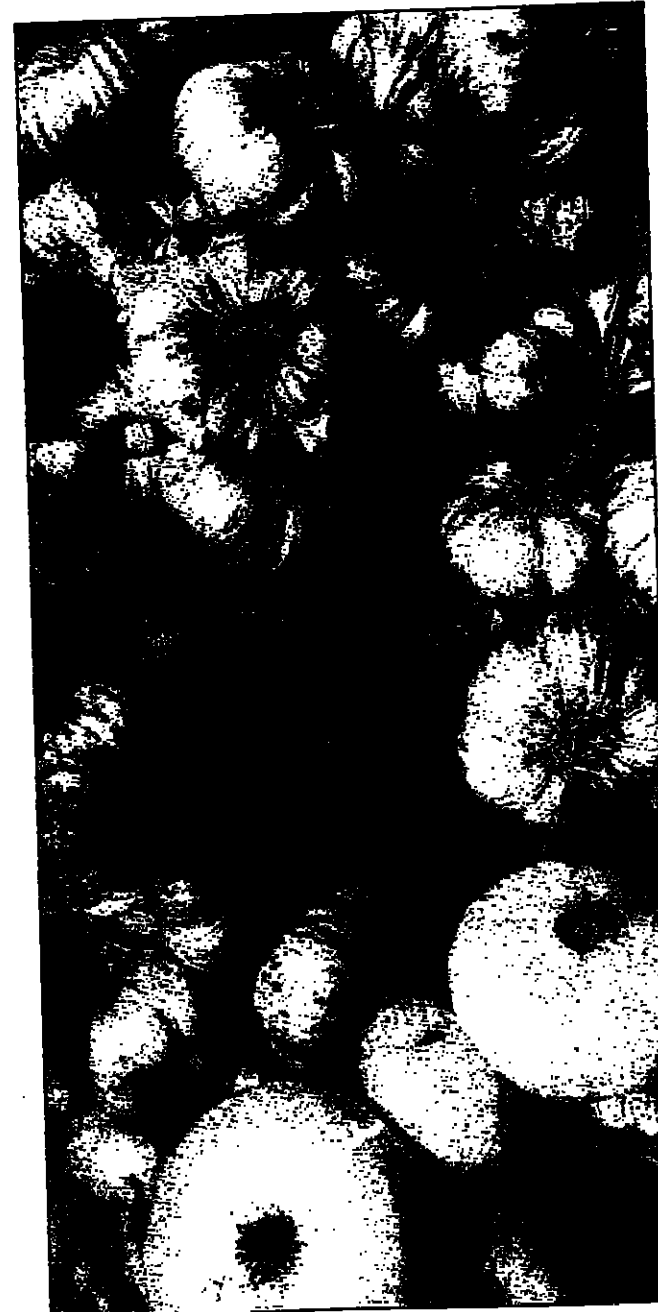
But as Jones would be the first to say, that's not all folks!

'Bugs Bunny on Broadway', Royal Festival Hall, tonight, tomorrow (0171 960 4242)



THE INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

Independent and Selfridges
Food Hall Exclusive Summer Event
Wednesday 3 June 7:30pm - 9pm



The Independent and Selfridges have again joined forces - this time for a celebration of summer food and drink on the 3rd June. On offer will be a variety of demonstrations from leading producers and suppliers, including caviar, beer and wine tutorials, a sushi-making demonstration and innumerable tutored tastings.

Each reader will be greeted with a complimentary glass of Selfridges champagne and receive a free bottle of Selfridges own-label cold pressed extra-virgin olive oil. Free parking for up to two hours is also available for readers spending more than £10.

Tickets for the event cost only £10 and can be bought on the door. Entry to the event is via the Orchard Street doors of Selfridges, 400 Oxford Street, W1.

Robbie shows off Sky's toll road

ANYONE with access to British Sky Broadcasting satellite channels will have noticed the recent advertising blitz heralding the latest pay-per-view event on their Box Office channel.

To use their own soundbite, Sky are in a league of their own when it comes to hype, but this latest apparently too-good-to-miss extravaganza could have far-reaching effects on future entertainment viewing in this country.

With promises of Armageddon-like confrontations, Sky viewers are used to seeing Frank Bruno, Chris Eubank and Prince Naseem selling us the latest "big" fight but... Robbie Williams?

The former Take That star has been using his successful musical regeneration to promote the UK's first pay-per-view pop concert. Courtesy of Sky Box Office, for £9.95, you can see "Robbie Williams - Live In Your Living Room" at 8pm tonight.

Williams' appearance at London's Forum has been sold out for months, but if his collaboration with Sky sells as well as his recent record releases then it may not be too long before you can watch many of your favourite artists live on television, regardless of ticket availability.

The potential market for such a venture is huge. Sky have built their



Robbie Williams will be appearing in a living room near you tonight

empire on the popularity of Premiership football and major boxing events, but these audiences are limited to the UK's sports fans. While Robbie Williams may not satisfy every music lover, how many people would pay to watch Eric Clapton at the Royal Albert Hall or Oasis at the Knebworth after every ticket had gone?

The media made much of the Premiership's rejection of Sky's proposal for pay-per-view football, but this new musical vein of toll-booth entertainment could prove as lucrative in the future.

"Robbie Williams is one of the major recording stars around and we wanted someone who would appeal to our viewers," said Sky spokesman, Phil Evans. "We were offered the rights to the

concert and were very pleased when the deal came to fruition. As this is the first event of its kind we have no real idea how successful it will be, but we've effectively re-opened the gates for the fans."

"When the figures come in after tonight's event we'll have a much better idea of whether we'll schedule other events of this kind in the future and what sort of viewing figures to expect."

Last week the BBC broadcast The Verve's live performance in Wigan. The concert was a sell-out, but if the Robbie Williams event is a success, many leading bands may turn to Murdoch for a higher return on their television rights.

"We are public service broadcasters and we want to appeal to a wider audience," said Andrew Skinner, BBC Deputy Head of Publicity. "Sky's operation and funding are different from ours, so it's difficult to make a direct comparison. People can choose not to pay for Robbie Williams, but people will have already paid for our broadcasts so we're committed to universal access."

"Let me entertain you" is the message that Robbie Williams has been sending Sky viewers for weeks.

And so he will – at a price.

— Alister Morgan

pilots
offer

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COVER

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Fame, fortune and Freud

If celebrity is a commodity, then Matthew Freud's PR empire has cornered the market. By Paul McCann

ON SUNDAY afternoon, eagle-eyed viewers of Sky TV's *Breaking News* story on the departure of Geri Halliwell from the Spice Girls could see the name Freud Communications on the press releases being handed out to journalists.

The recruitment of Ginger Spice to PR man Matthew Freud's stable should have come as no surprise. From Chris Evans to Damien Hirst, from New Labour to Planet Hollywood, the 34-year-old great-grandson of the founder of psychoanalysis is at one with the zeitgeist.

For in a time when B-list models and TV presenters can make a living from getting out of a taxi in a short skirt, the spirit of our age is celebrity. And celebrities are Matthew Freud's business.

He represents a string of corporate clients, such as BT, Pepsi, BSkyB and Kentucky Fried Chicken, but more importantly, he handles the PR for celebrities ranging from Steve Coogan to Arnold Schwarzenegger and events from the Young Labour Party conference to the Bafta awards.

The best way to comprehend the rise and rise of Matthew Freud is to understand that when he started his company in 1985 – in his Gloucester Place flat with Uri Geller and the British Precision Flying Team as clients, two staff and a cat called Spot – there was only one showbusiness gossip column in British newspapers. It was called *Ad Lib* and ran in the London *Evening Standard*. Shortly afterwards however, the *Sun* started its *Bizarre* column and soon all the tabloids had their own versions crying out for celebrity tit-bits, puffs and gossip.

"This has all progressed to the point where now six or seven pages of a tabloid can be devoted to a show-business story," says a close friend of Freud's. "This makes Matthew's business much, much easier."

It is not only easier, it is essential. If Matthew Freud did not exist, the tabloid press would need to invent him – someone who could be a central clearing house for the personality-driven stories that represent so much of their coverage.

Indeed, so important is Freud's stable to the tabloids that they call him – traditionally PR phone traffic is all the other way.

Showbusiness reporters would hate to admit it, but he is the story conduit too often to be ignored. And even although some newspapers are closer to him than others, there are times when everyone needs to deal with him. On Monday, thanks to the Geri Halliwell story and Chris Evans' intervention in the Paul

Gascoigne saga, his office logged 400 calls to him personally.

The secret of Freud's success was the early realisation that celebrity is a commodity. Across his client list, from Pizza Hut to Pepsi, celebrity endorsement is at the heart of the marketing and PR strategy.

And his ubiquity means that he has moved beyond simple PR to putting together packages that make him money all the way down the line. A typical Freud event works like this: a party will be held at Planet Hollywood, (a client); it is held to promote a movie such as *Titanic* (a client); to get coverage, celebrities (mainly his clients) will appear; it will then be covered by Virgin Radio (a client), or Sky News (also a client).

He has managed in the fame factory to take on a kind of vertical integration – just like the way a brewery buys a pub chain.

Freud himself sees his agency as in the same mould as Michael Ovitz's Hollywood agency CAA. In the Eighties, Ovitz pioneered the movie "package" of star, script and director. Freud too can now put together a star, a broadcaster, a TV production company and a commercial sponsor – all from his books – to create a new TV show that he would, of course, promote.

It is this business acumen that most former and current employees are happy to talk about. They are universally flattering about his talents, his charisma and his loyalty. He wins new business, they say, with a combination of connections and ideas.

The only worries that emerge are about what happens when the initial Freud enthusiasm for an account wanes. He has been criticised for working staff hard and paying them poorly, but this is no novelty in the PR industry. Furthermore, those who have worked for him and thrived don't seem to mind.

"Sure, I was young, and paid very little, and worked really hard," says former Freud employee Cath Taylor, who recently set up her own PR company. "But you get the very best experience, the very best contacts – and doors open for you when you leave because of your training."

Colleagues are less keen to talk about his private life. Freud understands celebrity well enough that he tries to stay out of the headlines himself. As the son of former Liberal MP Clement, brother of TV presenter Emma Freud, and a member of that family, celebrity attracts to him. They are close – Matthew used to get his staff in the early days to help canvass for his dad.

His fear of fame is probably justified. There are rumours circulating



Everything about Freud screams celebrity spin-doctor. But there's more to him than that

Photograph: Tom Piltson

about problems with his marriage to former employee Caroline Hutton and he has already been given a thorough going-over by a former girlfriend in *Punch* magazine – which described him having sex while making business calls. Diary columns have taken to dropping hints about his friendship with BSkyB's general manager, Elisabeth Murdoch, daughter of Rupert. But lying low is not easy. He is a partner in the trendy London restaur-

ants Quo Vadis and Pharmacy – the latter with Damien Hirst. He sits on the board of the Millennium Dome and is well-connected within the Labour Party, of which he is a member. He has no personal political ambitions himself – a drugs conviction when he was 17 has probably seen to that anyway – but his parties at Labour conferences and his friendship with Peter Mandelson mean that he has access, and more

importantly, contacts in all the places where it counts.

He also has money. He sold his company to advertising agency Abbott Mead Vickers for £2m, although he remains chairman and could make as much as £8m over five years in performance bonuses.

Everything about him screams celebrity spin-doctor, and yet there are anomalies. He travels to India once a year to visit an ashram and

in interviews he claims to enjoy carpentry more than being out on the town. And most unusually in an industry notorious for its bitchiness, most people are very nice about him.

Yet Matthew Freud's finger is in too many pies for him to retain his anonymity for much longer. No matter what power he might yield over the press, like Peter Mandelson and Alastair Campbell before him: the PR man is becoming the story.

The A-List: Matthew's friends



Client: Chris Evans



Client: Steve Coogan



Client: Geri Halliwell



Friend: Peter Mandelson



Partner: Damien Hirst

Who is going to care for my mother?

When Jon Snow's elderly parent was stricken with Alzheimer's, he struggled to find her a home. By Glenda Cooper

"THE stench of urine and the stench of the chemicals used to combat it. The whole thing was ghastly," says Jon Snow. "There were all these slumped figures in chairs. This is the hidden part of care in the community that we just never have to think about."

Today the Channel 4 newsreader will address the annual general meeting of the charity Counsel and Care, telling about his "dreadful" feelings of guilt at having to put his elderly mother, Joan, into a home.

Alzheimer's disease affects 350,000 people in Britain and is expected to affect 1 million in the next century. It is a physical condition which attacks the brain cells and although diagnosis is difficult, symptoms usually manifest themselves within six months to a year. It affects one in 20 over-65s and one in five over-80s.

Jon Snow's mother, now 87, started to develop Alzheimer's disease 10 years ago, and Jon and his two brothers faced a struggle to try to find a home for her to live in.

As the population ages it is an increasing problem for sons and daughters, who may be experts on childcare, but have little knowledge of how to find a good home for their parents.

"It's a desert out there," says Mr Snow. "We found an absence of support and of course you never have any real sense of who to contact and even when you do find who to contact there's not much information. There's such a lot of sink provision."

In the early stages of the disease, Joan remained in her own home in rural Dorset, with neighbours keeping an eye on her. "It was her neighbours – both much older than my mother – who bore the brunt of what was happening to her," says Mr Snow.

"At first they were desperate to help her stay in her own home. But finally, after a succession of chaotic adventures, we decided she would have to move. They had done a fantastic job to keep her going, but she was hallucinating and in the Dorset countryside there isn't much peripatetic care."

"Obvious to the gravity of her true condition, we set out to find the most beautiful local surroundings. We came up with two wonderful homes. She was out of the first in a night and out of the second in two. She finished up in Poole General Hospital on drugs. The geriatricians said we had to have her out of hospital and housed in a fortnight."



Jon Snow: 'I was ruthless in my refusal to accept less than the best'

Guilt wrestled with reality as each of Joan's sons trudged across Britain in search of a viable old people's home.

"The provision was ghastly almost universally. All over the country we met similar sons and daughters facing similar conflicts. Many facilities we found had long waiting lists – they would talk about three months and we had to find my mother something in weeks."

The Snows were fortunate. They found a home in Oxfordshire, widely regarded as one of the few specialist units in the country. A place became available and Joan remains there to this day. Mr Snow says he still has to deal with "terrible guilt".

"You have to take responsibility for taking someone out of their own home before they blow themselves up with the gas, or giving them the freedom to blow themselves up with the gas, and it's difficult."

"It's a very big step, taking someone's independence away from them. And what you know is that however good the home, it isn't a place you would want to be in yourself. You don't know what's going on inside of the mind of the victim. I really have no idea of what my mother is capable of knowing. I hope not very much."

The main problem the Snows faced was that while there were plenty of residential homes, there were fewer willing to take on an Alzheimer's sufferer who required quite intensive care.

"There were a lot of general old people's homes which were absolutely fine, where people have no problem living a pleasurable existence. The drawback is they don't have the intensive medical care that was needed."

"There's a combination of

exploitation and inadequate and inappropriate care for Alzheimer's victims. There's not a lot of good provision and it's only later you discover which is which."

"What happens is that there's a crisis and the individual gets taken by ambulance and put into a geriatric ward and you're given notice to put them into a home. What do you do? The hospital says 'here's a list of approved homes' and you find that they are all full or they don't exist

any more or they don't take that kind of patient."

"The first long-term facility we found for her was ghastly. She was locked in every night and my mother has a phobia about being locked in. We were only alerted because a member of staff put their job on the line and told us."

"We wrote to every single social services department in the country and got a list of homes from each. I was ruthless in my refusal to accept less than the best."

THE INDEPENDENT
ON SUNDAY

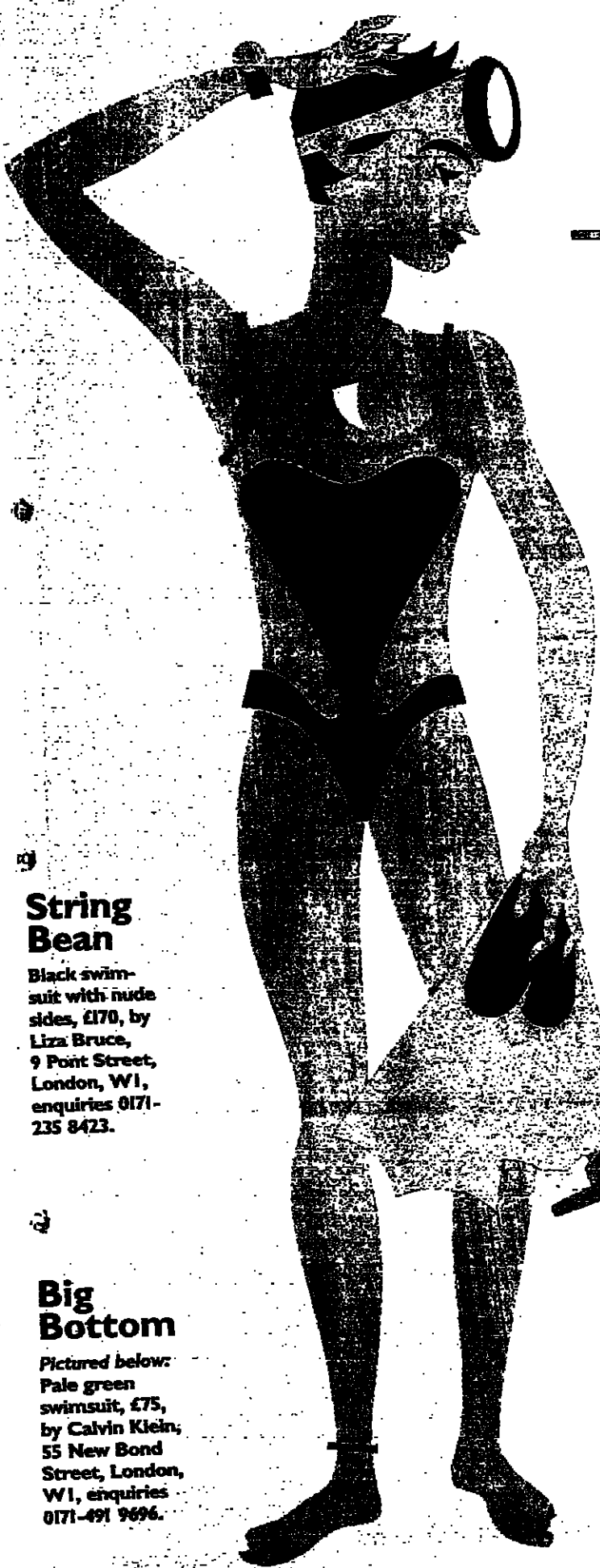
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is really wrong with
the environment?



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special scientific research report
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EARTHWATCH
INSTITUTE

What style of swimwear will suit your body shape? Fashion editor Tamsin Blanchard found out. Illustrations by Angela Dundee



String Bean

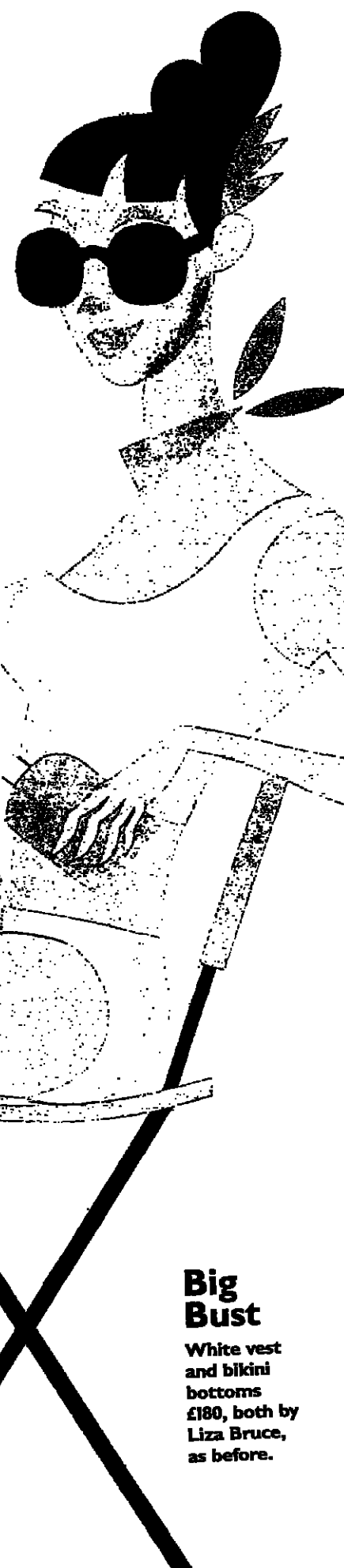
Black swimsuit with nude sides, £170, by Liza Bruce, 9 Point Street, London, W1, enquiries 0171-235 8423.

Big Bottom

Pictured below: Pale green swimsuit, £75, by Calvin Klein, 55 New Bond Street, London, W1, enquiries 0171-491 9696.

Stocky

Multi-colour striped vest and matching bikini bottoms, £125, by Missoni, from Harrods, Knightsbridge, London, SW1, enquiries 0171-839 4455.



Big Bust

White vest and bikini bottoms, £180, both by Liza Bruce, as before.



Pear Shaped

Blue swimsuit, £190, by La Perla, Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge, London, SW3, enquiries 0171-436 5864

How to avoid a bikini blunder

SALES assistants who work in swimwear departments see it all. They see sights most of us would rather keep in the confines of our bedrooms or in the anonymity of a crowded stretch of the Costa del Sol.

Behind the fitting-room curtains women of all shapes and sizes squeeze their bodies into swimsuits and bikinis made often with only three idealised shapes in mind. And women are not generally shaped anything close to their own ideal, never mind that of a swimwear company.

A perfect cup size will not usually correlate to the hip measurements designed to go with it. And vice versa. Why bikinis are not sold in separate halves like knickers and bras, with proper underwear sizing, is a mystery. And as for selling one-pieces in measurements as vague as "S", "M" and "L", where is the sense in that? No two women have identical body shapes, as Debenhams discovered when it recently commissioned an independent survey of British women's sizing. Forty per cent of the 2,500 women measured had different-sized upper and lower bodies. And only a third of those studied were wearing clothes that fitted them properly.

Not surprising, really, when you consider how limited the options on sizes are. When it comes to buying swimwear, the problem is magnified.

On *The Independent's* fashion team alone, there are figures that range in shape and size from what our stylist Sophia describes as her "world of plenty", with a cleavage for which many women would go

under the surgeon's knife, to our writer Melanie's svelte, slim runner-bean figure for which those who hadn't opted for the splendid *pointine* would submit themselves to the most excruciating liposuction.

As for me, I would class myself - without wanting to put myself through the rigours of a tape measure - as a "medium", with some excess baggage around the hips and middle that I would much rather leave at home. No matter what our shape, however, we are all in agreement that when it comes to exposing our bodies on a beach or next to a swimming-pool, we would all be grateful for a little bit of extra help.

hidden in a layer inside. If you have the budget, however, invest in Liza Bruce, the swimwear designer who works in industrial-weight Lycra to keep the most lively of figures firmly under control, whether for swimming or playing volleyball on the beach. For women with long or short torsos, the vest and knicker option is also recommended, so you don't have

the problem of a swimsuit being too tight or too loose at the crotch. You can wear it so that it looks like an all-in-one, adding length to the body, or with the top rolled up when you want to slap on the UV protection and catch some rays.

For those wanting a bit of support all over Calvin Klein's all-in-one with detachable halter strap has boning in the bust seams, a support panel at the tummy and some extra grip and uplift at the bottom.

For the great British pear shape, La Perla has just the thing: a one-shouldered bathing suit takes attention away from the offending hips. It is also relatively low cut on the leg so you don't have to go for an all-over body wax every time you go for a paddle.

Slim women who go straight up and down are not usually allowed to complain about their

body shape. But Liza Bruce - again - has a swimsuit that will make the stringiest of string beans look as curvy as Marilyn Monroe - well, almost. A black panel in the middle covers the parts you don't want to expose to all and sundry, while mesh side-panels become invisible when wet and create the illusion that you go in and out in all the right places. Obvious, really.

And if your body doesn't correspond to any of these, do not despair. It's not your body shape that is the problem, it's the swimwear manufacturers.

They would argue that they do not have the resources to cover every body shape and size. But help is at hand. Margaret Ann, an underwear, corsetry and swimwear specialist in Westminster, offers a huge range of sizes from a size 30AA up to a 56E bra in both bikinis and one-piece suits.

The company also has a mastectomy service - as does Splash Out, a Worthing-based swimwear company that will even make a swimsuit to your specifications. To have an individual pattern made costs £15-£20, and a made-to-measure swimsuit costs from £29 for a plain style and £31 for a patterned one. Off the peg is also available and suits can be altered by designer Maureen Smyth for as little as £1. Nothing, however small, tall, wide, lob-sided, round or wide, is considered a problem.

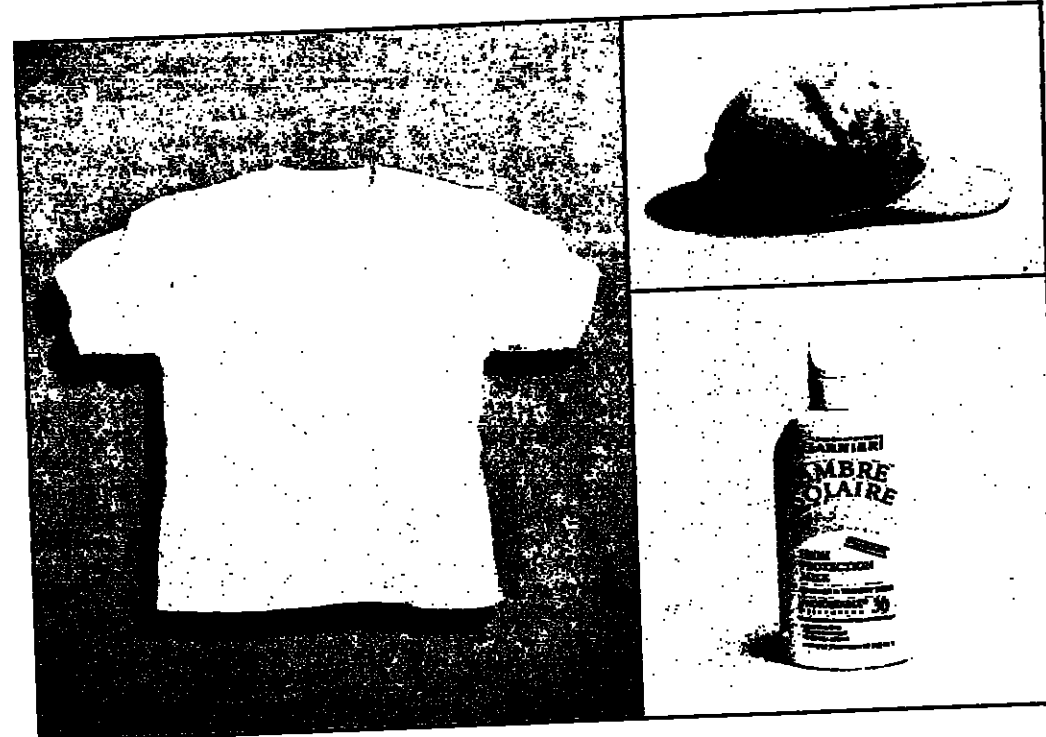
And that way, you don't have to suffer humiliation in a fluorescent-tube-lit department store cubicle. Happy holidays.

Margaret Ann, 01985 840520. Splash Out, 01903 230861.

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Brown grasps at the holy grail

THE GOLDEN RULE. Sounds mystical, doesn't it? It is the grail that successive Chancellors have grasped at but never quite managed to attain. Put simply, it says that a prudent government, like a wise individual or company, should never borrow to consume, but only to invest. Gordon Brown is the latest politician to seek the grail. He believes that it is the key to sound public finances and the best guarantee for the future of our public services. He is right, and he deserves our support.

If the golden rule is so straightforward and worthy, why has it proved so elusive? The reasons are straightforward. Politicians have always found it difficult to resist the temptation to borrow to spend more on the public services. Harold Wilson supposed that the civilising mission of state-sponsored spending would provide what the Pyramids, cathedrals and railways had provided in the past. Institutional links between the trade unions and the Labour Party fostered the cause of the public sector, especially over pay. Despite New Labour's "no favours" approach, this remains one of the many intense pressures on the Chancellor. The TUC went to see him yesterday to tell him to spend his "surplus cash" on the public services. They argue that "it is no use having a surplus if we still have long hospital waiting lists, large class sizes and teachers, nurses and doctors leaving the service".

But, whilst across-the-board rises cannot be afforded, HM Treasury is, as *The Independent* reported yesterday, in fact aware that there is a problem with public sector pay falling behind the private sector. The Treasury is, rightly, planning to direct what little funding it has found as a result of the comprehensive spending review towards key "front-line" staff who take on extra responsibilities. This is an imaginative and responsible approach to balancing the need for prudent finances and rewarding the most hard-pressed and talented of our health and teaching professionals.

It is tempting to caricature what the Chancellor is planning – a series of budget surpluses – as building up a pre-election fund ready to woo the electorate when the time comes. This is unfair. One day we will be grateful that we do indeed have a substantial buffer to protect our public services when a depressed economy provides too little in tax to fund education and health properly. That is a perfectly legitimate ambition. By the standards of our recent history, it might even be thought of as a golden one, too.

National Lottery fever needs to be calmed

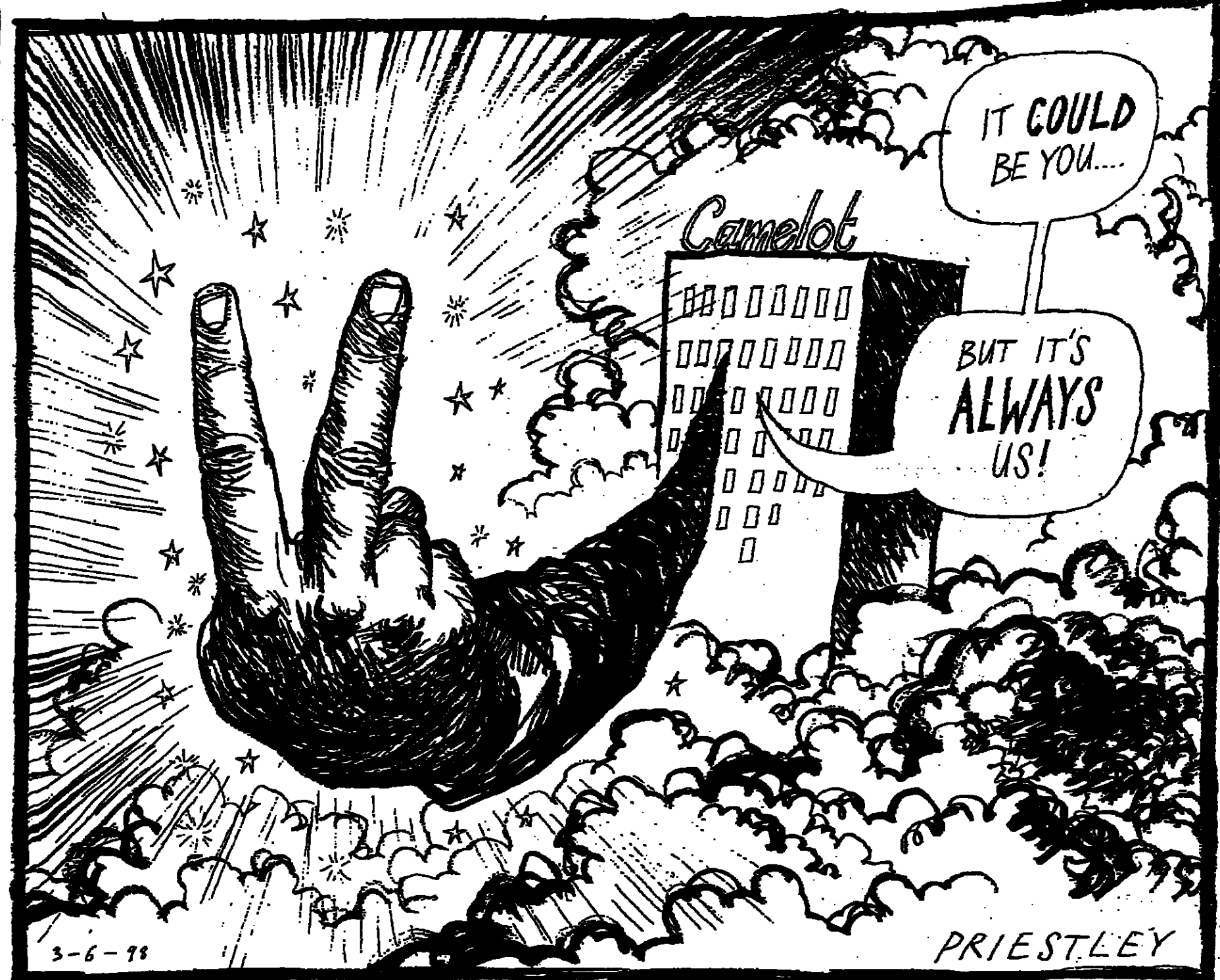
THE REASON why the profits of the National Lottery are running at £1m a week is not that Camelot is raiding money that should be going to good causes but that the lottery is far more successful than anyone could have foreseen. The profit is simply the result of Camelot efficiently running a monopoly granted to it by the Government. No one was to know what instinctive, impulsive and compulsive a breed of gamblers the British would turn out to be. That is the real problem. The image of a nation of little gamblers who cannot resist just having a trivial flutter every week is far from the truth. Those least able to gamble are doing so excessively. Even if it was not designed to be, the lottery seems to be a very good vehicle for inducing addiction. There is all the showbiz that has been attached to the draws, including the execrable new BBC show on Saturday nights. There is the "it could be you" advertising that never mentions the 14-million-to-one odds against winning the jackpot. And there is the additional midweek draw that especially tempts those many souls who always choose the same six numbers.

Distasteful and miserable though much of the lottery phenomenon is, this is certainly one genie that will never be put back in its bottle, if only because too many public projects have, sadly, come to rely on it for funding. But there are limited, pragmatic measures that could easily be taken to rein the lottery in. Camelot should be granted no more draws. When the Government comes to look at the new licence applications it could limit the lottery to one draw a week. It could easily take the glamour out of the TV coverage. Most importantly, the lottery organisers should be required to show how their proposals would minimise addiction and make provision for those individuals who are unfortunate enough to have their lives wrecked by the lottery. In some ways the lottery has been a tremendous success and has helped the so-called good causes. But the time has come to recognise the harm it has brought in its wake and to civilise it as far as we can.

Fame fit for pigs

THE DIFFERENT fates of Paul Gascoigne, Geri Halliwell and even some Tory politicians tell us quite a lot about the state of fame. The modern celebrity must fall, it seems, into one of two categories: those who make a little talent go a long way, and those whose genius is so fatally flawed that they self-destruct. So, Ginger Spice was not the most musically talented but capitalised on her flair as a businesswoman to emerge as *prima inter Spices*. Paul Gascoigne is the obvious flawed genius. Ann Widdecombe's career, fascinatingly, has straddled both categories; a political suicide attack on Michael Howard last year (flawed genius) was followed by a very skilful exploitation of formidable but narrow political skills to win her recent promotion.

Enter the pigs. The Tamworth Two are emphatically not flawed geniuses. Although they are highly intelligent creatures with correspondingly complex personalities, they will, probably, never bother to go drinking with Chris Evans. They got one good break down at the abattoir (for which they made sure they were 100 per cent fit) and they know how to hog the limelight on the back of it. One cannot blame them for charging £1,500 per porcine appearance but this seems a damning, if comic, indictment on where celebrity stands today.



Work or family

Sir: Your leading article (1 June) says "there is a big difference between the sexes in how they balance the demands of work and family life; on the whole, women do and men don't".

That is the opposite of what the survey you report suggests. You state that women suffer most over the loss of personal life through work. The difference between men and women on this point, however, is very small – 61 per cent of women and 55 per cent of men reported this in the survey. The parallel report by Opportunity 2000 found no differences between young men and women on this point.

You welcome the idea that the terms of the work/life debate are moving beyond the gender war, that it is in the interests of both sexes that the culture of work should change. But you remain stuck in the language of the gender war. You have consistently argued that women need to be permitted more choices. Meanwhile, you tell men that their "attitudes" need to change. You still present one sex as victim, the other as offender.

Society imposes stereotypical roles on both men and women. Any person stepping out of role, women into work, or men into childcare, faces sexism. As a part-time carer of my child, I can recount numerous little exclusions (such as the weekly "mums and toddlers" group that I attend). Men and women, particularly the young, are demanding an end to the boundaries that limit them. Women are demanding more participation in work, and men more participation in family life, particularly young men.

For us, the gender war is ancient history. Young men and women want all that life can give them. Public policy must enable greater flexibility in both directions. This is about equal opportunities for both men and women in both work and childcare. **DUNCAN FISHER**
Crickhowell, Powys

Sir: Living together with a mortgage and having a family while both working is a matter of choice. Do those whom you favour with your skills have to be grateful and run their businesses to your convenience?

It would appear that the "what I

want I want now" culture is running up against the buffers of reality. If one wishes to indulge in all that's on offer, and that costs money, sacrifices have always had to be made; so let us have a little less whingeing. **ROBERT VINCENT**
Andover, Hampshire

Sir: Last year, I gave up a well-paid full-time job with a large manufacturing company. Working long hours was expected, and people were expendable. I was beginning to hate both my job and the company. I am now self-employed and work three days a week for a consultancy company.

I have no children but I do have elderly parents. I wanted to be here for them, to reduce my stress levels and to get a life. I chose to give up a good pension, a guaranteed regular income, paid holidays and sick leave.

I have gained time; time to spend with my parents; time to see friends more often than once in six months; time to stop and talk with neighbours rather than a greeting in passing; time to do simple things like exploring local antique shops on quiet days mid-week, reading the papers in the garden on a sunny day, leaving the washing until tomorrow because I'm not working tomorrow. I'm healthier, calmer and much more appreciative of the things that really matter in my life.

There is no magic secret – it is just a question of redefining your priorities and being honest about exactly what you want from life. If your priority is to be the next Richard Branson – good luck to you! Somebody has to do it, but it won't be me. **ROSE CRAWLEY**
Driffield, East Yorkshire

Difficult Labour

Sir: I was surprised by your leading article (29 May) praising Tony Blair's "third way". While recent decisions on economic policy may indeed give

LETTERS

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the appearance of a principled position, in reality they are the worst sort of unprincipled compromise – first promising policies to please the trade unions, and then implementing them in such a way as to please the CBI.

Robin Cook's vaunted "ethical" foreign policy lies exposed as a sham. The "new" European policy consists in continuing with the previous government's policies, but saying so more politely. At home Jack Straw has embarked on an unprecedented programme of populist authoritarianism. Even constitutional reform has largely been a sham: the new devolved parliaments have few real powers, as all decisions on controversial issues have been reserved to Westminster, while the shambles of electoral reform (was it really necessary to have a different electoral system for every new body created?) shows every sign of being gerrymandered to preserve a Labour majority.

The Northern Ireland peace process is indeed an impressive achievement, but it stands alone. **DR JONATHAN A JONES**
Oxford

Sir: On Monday 1 June you led the paper with a story about a report on welfare by Gordon Brown which you said showed up differences between the Prime Minister and the Chancellor. At my morning briefing that day, I pointed out that the report was actually the product of the Labour Party's Joint Policy Committee, of which the Prime Minister is chairman. In your feature on the Prime Minister and the Chancellor ("An insider's guide to the rival wings of New Labour", 2 June), your reporter referred to my "rebuttal" of Monday's story. It would have been more honest to spell out what the rebuttal was, difficult though it is for newspapers to admit their stories are wrong. **ALASTAIR CAMPBELL**
*10 Downing Street
London SW1*

Sir: So according to your "insider's guide to the rival wings of New Labour" (2 June), John Monks is viewed as a "moderniser" who "nevertheless supports Swinton Rugby League Club". Good grief, does this mean New Labour views the support of rugby league as a revisionist trait? Can I no longer support the London Broncos without a feeling of guilt that I am undermining Tony Blair's entire administration?

But then, we all know about rugby league don't we, all those whippets and flat caps and oh, how wonderfully quaint and Northern and working-class it is – all this and that poor man Monks still expects to be taken seriously as a progressive voice in the Labour movement! **VINCENT JAMES MORGAN**
London NW6

Banana islands

Sir: Trevor Phillips' article "Debt relief for the Third World is not enough" (16 May) made some interesting points about developing countries and overseas companies which operate there. But the side-swipe at Geest Bananas was unwarranted. He implies that the Windward Islands are single-industry economies, and that Geest Bananas somehow "rule the roost" in the Windwards.

The Windward Islands have probably the most participative banana industry in the world. Each island has its own Banana Growers' Association, owned and controlled by the farmers. These associations, together with the Windward Island governments, own the Windward Islands Banana Development & Exporting Company, which in turn owns 50 per cent of Geest Bananas. Local farmers can therefore directly benefit from the shipping and marketing of their product. **CK COMERFORD**
*Chief Executive, Geest Bananas Ltd
Southampton*

Fake science in schools

Sir: Congratulations to Emma, Andrew and Rebecca Fist for puncturing the candle-under-a-jar experiment ("Pupils pour cold water on candle experiment", 29 May). I gave up demonstrating this experiment 30 years ago because it is so obviously phoney and I find it surprising that text-books still refer to it.

Your explanation is, however, also flawed. It is not mainly the heating of the air before the jar is placed over the candle which causes trouble but the heating after this, which expands the air inside the jar, forcing bubbles out under the rim. On cooling back to room temperature, there is therefore much less air in the jar. A second, equally serious, flaw is the assumption that the candle will continue to burn until all the oxygen in the air has been consumed. It will, in fact, cease to burn when the oxygen content has fallen from its normal 21 per cent to about 15 per cent.

A valid experiment of this type which overcomes both the above problems and gives an approximately correct result involves igniting yellow phosphorus under a bell-jar. It was demonstrated to me as an 11-year-old 45 years ago but few schools take the trouble to do it now.

All three main sciences have their jokers-in-the-pack among school experiments. Having disposed of the jar-and-candle, perhaps the First children would like to take on the balloons-in-a-bell-jar, which purportedly shows what causes the lungs to inflate on inhalation, and the physics teachers' "spouting jar" which is erroneously supposed to prove that water pressure increases with the height of a column of water. **DEREK HASLAM MSC**
Colne, Lancashire

Musical disaster

Sir: It explains an awful lot if the Spice Girls were signed to Virgin by their Accident & Emergency department, as Rosie Millard relates (Comment, 1 June). **AL MURRAY**
Hampstead, London



MILES KINGSTON

IT'S NEARLY World Cup time, the time when thousands of you will be flooding across the Channel in search of football fulfilment, in the grip of the passion and despair which can only come from supporting the England or Scotland football team!

And that's not all. You'll also find they speak a different language over there in France.

It's called French. Why not learn a modicum before you go there? It will really improve the quality of life for you! To help you, I have drawn up a basic list of the phrases you will need to make sense of football life in France this fateful June.

Ready? Here we go!

Regardez Paul.
Look at Paul.
Pauvre Paul.
Poor Paul.
Paul s'enrage.

Paul seems to be in a bit of a paddy about something.
Qu'est-ce qu'il a?
What's up with him now?
On lui a chuchoté à l'oreille qu'il ne va pas jouer pour l'Angleterre dans la lutte pour la Coupe Jules Rimet.
He has been told that he has been dropped from the final England squad line-up.

Oh la la la!
Blimey O'Reilly!
Il ne peut pas le croire.
He is incredulous.
D'abord, il ne comprend pas même ce qu'on lui dit.
To begin with, he cannot believe his ears, and his ears cannot really believe it either.
Hier soir, il a beaucoup bu.
Last night he put a few away.
Et maintenant il a une tête comme l'intérieur d'un Aga.

And now he is a bit fuzzy.
Donc, il ne peut pas digérer la nouvelle amère.

So he is finding it all a bit hard to take in.

Surtout parce qu'il n'est pas célèbre pour son IQ.

Especially as he is not quick on the uptake at the best of times.

A ce qu'on dit.

Allegedly.
Lui? Gazza? Héros de Wembley? Ami de Chris Evans? Fils du Nord-Est d'Angleterre, oui, Geordieland, ou l'on fabrique la fameuse bière Brune de Châteaufort?

Him? Gazza? Creator of that famous goal in Euro 96 where he flicked the ball over the Scottish defender and slotted it home, which they keep showing over and over on the telly, until we are all sick of it, not least the Scottish defender in question?
"Ce n'est pas vrai!"

"I don't sodding believe it!"
Paul perd son cool.
See Paul lose his rag.
Il donne un coup de pied aux meubles de Glenn Hoddle.

He kicks Glenn Hoddle's furniture.
D'après ce qu'on dit.

Allegedly.
C'est pas sage, ça.

Not a good idea, Paul.
On peut abîmer sa propre chambre, mais...

If you're going to trash a hotel room, it should be your own...
N'importe...
Still and all...
C'est la fin pour Gazza maintenant, je crois.

It's curtains for Gazza, internationally speaking.
Point de vue mariage, aussi.
Maritally speaking, too.

N'importe, hein!
Never mind, eh?
Il a toujours ses copains...
He still has his mates.
L'ami gros et gras...
Danny Baker...
L'ami espion au poil de carotte...
Chris Evans.
Avec des amis comme ça...
With friends like that...
Qui a besoin des ennemis?
Who needs enemies?
Un Notaire Ajoute:
A Lawyer Writes:
Fais gaffe, M. Kingston. N'oubliez pas les lois de diffamation.
Don't forget the libel laws, Mr Kingston.
Dae!
Fair enough!
(Coming soon – more vital French phrases AND the lowdown on M. Jules Rimet...)

This is the week of exams – but don't despair if you fail them



HAMISH
MCRAE

IT IS exam time in our household, as in millions across the land, with one daughter this week starting A-Levels and the other finishing them. While in Britain we have not quite reached the "exam hell" of Japan – where young people are coached till midnight at specialised cramming and the newspapers are full of model answers to the public exams – we do seem to be taking this ritual of testing academic achievement more and more seriously. And for all the stuff about continuous assessment, exams remain the principal technique for doing so.

There is one powerful practical reason why exams are going to become more important still. It is that most of the "new" jobs that are being created need skills that can be measured by the technique of an examination. Of course we may be teaching people the wrong skills and testing them in a crude and imperfect manner. But that is an argument for better-crafted exams, not no exams.

New jobs need computer literacy, the ability to write clearly, to handle telephone conversations, marshal and project arguments, and so on. All of these skills can be measured quite simply by sitting someone down and getting them to do a test. In fact, our conventional set of exams is probably quite a good way of assessing people's use in the job market.

By contrast the "old" jobs, typically semi-skilled production-line jobs, do not particularly lend themselves to a conventional examination. You could teach people to do those jobs without needing them to be particularly bright in a conventional academic way. Now, I'm afraid, conventional academic skills are coming to matter more and more.

Why "afraid"? Well, because a world where academic skills matter more and more in the workplace is fine for those of us who can cope with exams. Writing a newspaper column, by the way, is just like writing a timed essay: life is doing an exam a day. But this trend is dreadful for the vast numbers of hardworking, honourable and decent people who just happen not to be particularly "academic".

The problem is not just that low-skilled people are finding themselves slipping down the earnings ladder, but enough to say that it is also that people who have practical skills, rather than academic ones, seem also to be losing ground. Yet the world needs people who can do practical tasks, not just those who can do quasi-academic ones. We cannot all be lawyers.

But all trends reverse themselves in the end, and, mercifully, I think we can begin to see this trend turning too. The most important single skill demanded by the market is increasingly one that has nothing to do with academic performance, and which cannot be tested in any conventional way. It is called entrepreneurship.

Of course, there have been strings of famous millionaires who either dropped out of university or never made it in the first place. Bill Gates and Richard Branson spring to mind. But this is not something that applies just to a tiny handful of winners. There are powerful trends in the world economy that will require ordinary people, not just those in the business community, to be more entrepreneurial in the way they run their lives.

Everyone now accepts that the idea of jobs for life is dead. What we are finding harder to figure out is how to adapt to a world of economic uncertainty. Uncertainty is not all bad: with it comes much greater opportunity. But while we know that we have to adapt, for example, to the idea of having three or four or more different careers, working out how we should in practice prepare for that is much tougher. It is fine in theory to say that people have to become more flexible, but that sentiment is not much help on the Monday morning after you have been made redundant.

If, on the other hand, you already had been thinking about starting a business anyway, the redundancy cheque is the ticket to liberation: for the wonderful thing about a service-oriented economy is that the entry cost is very low. Anyone with a good idea can have a go.

So while the labour market seems to demand more and more formal qualifications (which is bad news for people who can't pass exams), it is also asking people to be more imaginative and commercial in the way they run their entire lives. So people with common sense, vigour, creativity, humour, charm, a willingness to save – all qualities that have nothing to do with academic achievement – will also do very well. In fact, people with these

New jobs need skills that can be measured by getting people to do a test

qualities, particularly common sense, may well do better than people who in conventional terms are more highly qualified.

What we have now is a job market where, for many people, the formal exam system will become more important still. Getting over the string of exam hurdles will be the main way, maybe the only way, in which you can cross over the threshold into a top-flight employer.

It is a bit alarming that top companies on the university milk round look at A-Level results as much as final degrees, but apparently A-Levels are a good guide to future performance in the company. And passing less academic tests will continue to be important for all sorts of other "new" jobs.

But parallel to this exam-oriented culture will be an entrepreneurship-oriented culture. The fuzziest opportunities will occur in areas where no-one gives a thought about exam performance, where there are no academic barriers to entry.

So for the people for whom this exam season turns out to be less than wholly successful, all is not lost. There is another way.

It is not an easier way. In many ways it is a harder one, for you have to run up the stairs instead of rising up the escalator. But it may be more fun.

No wonder so many young men are alienated when we eulogise this ape



SUZANNE
MOORE

YOU will not catch me blubbering because of the latest tragedy to have befallen the nation. Indeed, if we are to use the word tragedy to describe what happens when an unfit footballer is left out of a team what will we say when something really bad happens?

No matter that what has happened to Gazza is self-inflicted, apparently we can not manage without his magic touch. I do not profess to know much about his footballing abilities, but my line on Gazza has been consistent ever since he beat up his wife. He should have been out of the game a long time ago.

What does it say about the football establishment when it is far more acceptable to abuse your wife than to abuse the odd kebab. When he beat up Sheryl we were told it was personal and therefore Hoddle forgave him. Everything came second to the only game in town. The booze, the karaoke, the hanging out with media yobs however is a different matter as it might affect his performance.

Now Gazza has paid the price, the price of believing his own myth, the price of being an embarrassing beer monster who has never had to grow up. The re-written *Three Lions* will have to be re-written again as it includes the line "Gazza as good as before". All his drinking pals are rallying round telling us Gazza could have been great. He could have been a contender. The entire script is being written with Gazza as a tortured soul, a genius trapped in the body of a thuggish idiot.

So while on one hand there is some understanding that believing the hype – that he was untouchable both on the field and off it – is part of the reason that Gascoigne is in the state he's in, on the other a whole new set of myths have already come into play. Anyone who saw the TV documentary about Gazza will not recognise a charming man, full of boyish pranks who has simply been



Gazza may be hopeless, but what made him so? Photograph: Ben Radford/ALLSPORT

lead astray by his more glamorous friends.

They will remember an emotionally retarded bully without a clue how to do anything other than kick a ball around a field.

The comparisons with George Best are also ludicrous. George Best would have had women queuing up to be with him even if he had been a plumber. Why? Because he looked like George Best. The women who have thrown themselves at Gazza have had, I imagine, to get over his looks and "personality" and remind themselves he was

really a top footballer. None of this would matter in the slightest if Gazza was not regarded as a role model. All the agonising over the alienated young males of this country is entirely meaningless if we continue to eulogise such an ape. Yet even I have some sympathy for the man.

He may be hopeless but we have to ask what has made him so entirely hopeless. Why is it so impossible for certain men to achieve anything like maturity? We must blame the football establishment for treating their players as children just as we must blame the record companies for ferrying drugs back and forth to keep their various "artists" in the studio.

I have seen this process first hand. When someone gets a degree of success they no longer have to do any of the things that would keep them in touch with the world. They don't have to drive themselves around, do their own washing or make any of their own decisions. If they screw up, someone else makes their excuses for them. Some people adjust better

If however you are a sportsman then what you do to your body matters, because nobody ever wanted you for your mind in the first place. The endless reports of Gazza's tantrums and outbursts reveal someone who may have great ball control but has no control over his internal workings.

He talks of the contents of his own limited brain as though they were a great mystery – for he speaks the classic male language of having emotions happen to him rather than feeling he has any command over them. There was even the ridiculous claim that when he

saying "It's not my fault, my wife did it." Peer pressure didn't make Gazza drink I'm sure, but having real wits like Evans and Danny Baker laugh at his dumb jokes probably made him feel he was invincible.

Unfortunately, in this world, it doesn't seem to take much to be classified as an all-round good guy, one of the lads, a real geezer. At the weekend, a studio packed full of rent-a-celebs gathered to celebrate the wit, wisdom and wiggling bum of uber-lad Rod Stewart.

Sure there is classic Rod – Maggie May – but there is also clueless Rod, such as Rod and his rhetorical question "Do you think I'm sexy?" Never mind. Had he ever had an affair with a woman named Maggie, an investigative celebrity asked. Rod couldn't really remember but there had been someone and he had "given her a good shagging". Hardly Oscar Wilde but oh how the audience fell about.

In such an environment it is no surprise that the behaviour of a Neanderthal like Gazza is considered acceptable, as long it doesn't interfere with his football. Rather than debate the issue in Parliament perhaps we should discuss the fate of the boys for whom Gazza was and will remain an icon.

If somehow, with a little less help from his friends, Gazza can turn himself into a human being rather than a caricature of added masculinity, all is not lost. If his so-called mates stopped patronising him, if the football establishment stopped mollycoddling him, maybe he could learn to stand on his own two feet instead of just stamping them.

What a favour he would be doing for the boys who bunk off school, who think doing any schoolwork makes them look less hard, who believe real men eat kebabs and smack around their women, but who will never get their weddings in *Hello* because they have no saleable talent.

Don't cry for Gazza, a has-been at 31, the real tears should be shed for the wannabes who are still genuinely too young to know any better.

Unfortunately, it doesn't take much to be classified as an all-round good guy, one of the lads, a real geezer

really a top footballer.

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than others to this experience, but clearly some young men become deep-frozen in perpetual adolescence, never functioning as self-sufficient adults. In certain careers this may even be an advantage. If you are Keith Richards, you can get your blood changed regularly; if you are Rod Stewart you can get a new blonde when ever necessary; if you are Chris Evans you can extend your media empire while pretending you do nothing but go to the pub.

was violent towards his wife he was possessed by spirits outside himself, rather than the spirits he had so obviously drowned.

This is what is so depressing about the whole business. If there was in this whole sorry saga a smidgen of insight, the floating of the possibility that Gascoigne had the potential to change, to mature, to lead another kind of life, then there would be some hope.

Instead we have the cheerleaders of the yobocracy all

It will take more than a reshuffle to put the Tories on course



ANNE
MCELVOY

THE language of reshuffles is rigid. If they aren't purges, they are "tinkering". They are always deemed to hang, like gentlemen, to the left or the right. William Hague's new concatenation of talents has been dubbed "centre-right".

The headline words were "modern" and "technocratic".

But what is the Tory Party centre-right, modern and technocratic about that centre-left, modern and technocratic New Labour isn't? Able figures such as David Willetts, who will shadow David Blunkett, find that New Labour is as unafraid of change in office as it was in Opposition.

In education, it is giving schools more power over their own affairs and pushing back the monolithic LEAs. It is introducing elements of selection in order to raise standards. This is coyly called "specialisation", which is rather like calling a spade a soil-displacement implement.

Mr Willetts has long been in favour of these ideas. So how

is he to respond when New Labour does what the Tories have been asking them to do? Other ministers will have the same problem.

The Government is constantly reforming and refining its ideas – as well as ideas that have become the lost property of the Conservative Party.

The lurper Tory mind has one answer to this – namely to call for a more ideologically pure version of whatever policy the Government is pursuing. At this point, the tactical argument is lost, since the public concludes that New Labour is the party of moderation and the Tories the bog-eyed ideologues.

Mr Hague would not be the former McKinsey management consultant man he is if he were not aware of this danger. He

knows he still has a vital question to answer: what kind of party do the Conservatives want to be? True, he now has some better brains at the top table to help him answer it. Mr Willetts and Francis Maude are high calibre. Behind her comic self-effacement, Ann Widdicombe is a sharp cookie.

From these parts, Mr Hague must begin to forge a whole. The outgoing shadow cabinet was less a choir than a loosely orchestrated ensemble. If there is an *esprit de corps* and a shared sense of purpose, it has not been visible to the naked eye.

There are two possible responses to electoral disaster. One, favoured by Mr Blair when he led Labour in opposition, was to admit that the party

and the electorate had parted company and set out to rebuild the relationship from scratch. The other, to which many Tories are still prone, is to assume that it was only the high policy division of Europe that caused the Stalingrad; so unite behind a new leader and carry on as before.

But the assumptions of old Conservatism will no longer suffice to regain power.

The old ties of mythical Toryism have frayed. The sanctity of the Commons, the House of Lords, the way the United Kingdom is built and wired, the electoral system, are all under assault. To their horror, the British public does not really care as long as their taxes do not have to pay higher taxes for these schemes.

The Conservative Party needs to reflect a country that is more flexible and less attached to the trappings of tradition than it is. It cannot afford to lapse into moral fundamentalism, nor convene itself as a kind of libertarian cabal. Most of all, it needs to make itself attractive to the William Hague of tomorrow – who are meritocratic and unemblemised by snobbery, rigidity and Carlton Club sexism.

In order to make his party re-electable, Mr Hague has to take on the prejudices of many of his own party members, who see nothing wrong with their world view and are constitutionally unsuited to a climate of change. That is a *Kulturkampf* to make Mr Blair's Clause 4 fight seem like a minor skirmish.

Horde hols

AS Tony Blair zooms from one summit meeting to the next, "The Horde" – Labour backbenchers – enjoy remarkably leisurely lives. In addition to all the weekends, bank holidays, Christmas, Easter and summer recesses, Government backbenchers have been allowed one "Constituency Week" off per term by Labour Chief Whip Nick Brown. That translated into roughly three extra weeks per year during which Members were (in theory) back home among their flock, free of any House voting obligations and resisting the temptation to fly off to Marbella or San Francisco on holiday. Now Pandora has learned that Labour's "Constituency Week" innovation has proved a resounding success. So much so that, henceforth, each backbencher is now allowed two

Constituency Weeks per term! That makes six extra weeks of holiday... er, of local case work for every backbencher. Now why would Labour Whips want to keep their "Horde" separated and far-flung for so much of the year? To keep it from conspiring, perhaps even rebelling?

Taki's pal

A COLLEAGUE at the *Independent on Sunday*, Alan Watkins, reported that Paul Johnson might be departing from the *Daily Mail* in the near future. When Pandora rang Johnson yesterday to inquire, there was no time to broach the question. "You're a gossip columnist, aren't you?" Johnson growled. "I don't ever talk to gossip columnists. It's nothing personal. I don't trust them and I've

PANDORA

learned not to talk to them. Sorry. Goodbye." Pandora has to wonder if gossip columnist Taki, one of Johnson's most ardent supporters in recent weeks, receives the same cordial reception when he rings?

Dublin choice

THERE is still no successor named to replace America's Ambassador to Ireland, Jean Kennedy Smith, due to depart Dublin at the end of this month. Smith was loathed by the British government, so one would have expected President Clinton to have already nominated someone highly qualified and equally acceptable to both Dublin

and London. Now the names of two strong candidates for the job have been leaked to an Irish newspaper in New York. One is Mike Sullivan, a former governor of Wyoming, to whom Clinton owes a political debt but who is virtually unknown outside his home state. The other, more worryingly, is Bruce A. Morrison, a former member of Congress from Connecticut, with strong ties to Sinn Féin.

Latvian humour

RESHUFFLE fever is in full swing. It's worth taking a glance at Paddy Ashdown's plans. Perhaps the number one Lib Dem candidate for the discard pile is David Chidgey, shadow Trade & Industry spokesman. Things started badly for the burly, cigar-puffing Chidgey in the last election cam-

paign. On one occasion, receiving a delegation of visiting Latvians, they all erupted into guffaws upon hearing Chidgey's name. Unfortunately, its pronunciation sounded to their ears as the Latvian "dici" – in other words "tests". Perhaps Chidgey has a future on the Latvian comedy stage?

Merci, Hugh

FORMER Tory MP Hugh Dykes, who is fiercely pro-Europe, found his spiritual home with the Liberal Democrats after the last election. Now he is about to become Paddy Ashdown's special advisor on European Union Affairs. Pandora wonders if this special thank-you from Paddy might enhance Hugh's chances of becoming a Lib Dem candidate in the next Euro elections.

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Helen Guiterman

WORK by the Scottish painter David Roberts RA (1796-1864) is now extensively collectable. His often dramatic architectural subjects range from Scotland to Syria, Egypt and Abu Simbel. His enormous output, both original and published, won him comfort and fame and perfect sets of his *His Holy Land: Syria, Idumea, Arabia, Egypt and Nubia* (1842-49), the finest of Victorian lithographed travel volumes, are now in the £50,000 bracket, as well as forming the basis of a significant Middle Eastern reproduction industry. In scholarly terms, however, Roberts was one of many neglected "minor" Victorians until about 1961, when Helen Guiterman, a middle-aged local government officer - bought two drawings attributed to him from a Swiss Cottage dealer - they cost her £3.

Only one was genuine but they set her off in a pursuit of "everything about Roberts" that was to last for over 30 years, re-establishing him as probably the most intrepid of Victorian artist-travellers, and opening a significant new window into both the London art and theatre worlds of the 1820s on.

Helen Guiterman was born in Bournemouth, in 1916. She was educated at St George's School, Harpenden, gained a Diploma in Fine Art from the Slade School, London, in 1936 and then studied design for a further six months in New York, specialising in textiles. Though of conventional, middle-class background, she was a lifelong socialist and an active pre-war anti-Fascist.

As a student she worked for the British Youth Peace Assembly and, after Russian entry into the Second World War for the Anglo-Soviet Youth Friendship Alliance. Of this she became secretary and after the war organised and joined a Youth Delegation to the Soviet Union, an experience she regarded as one of the most interesting of her life.

After reorganising the photographic records in the publications department of the Tate Gallery, in 1945-47, she joined the architect's department of Middlesex County Council as an interior designer, moving to

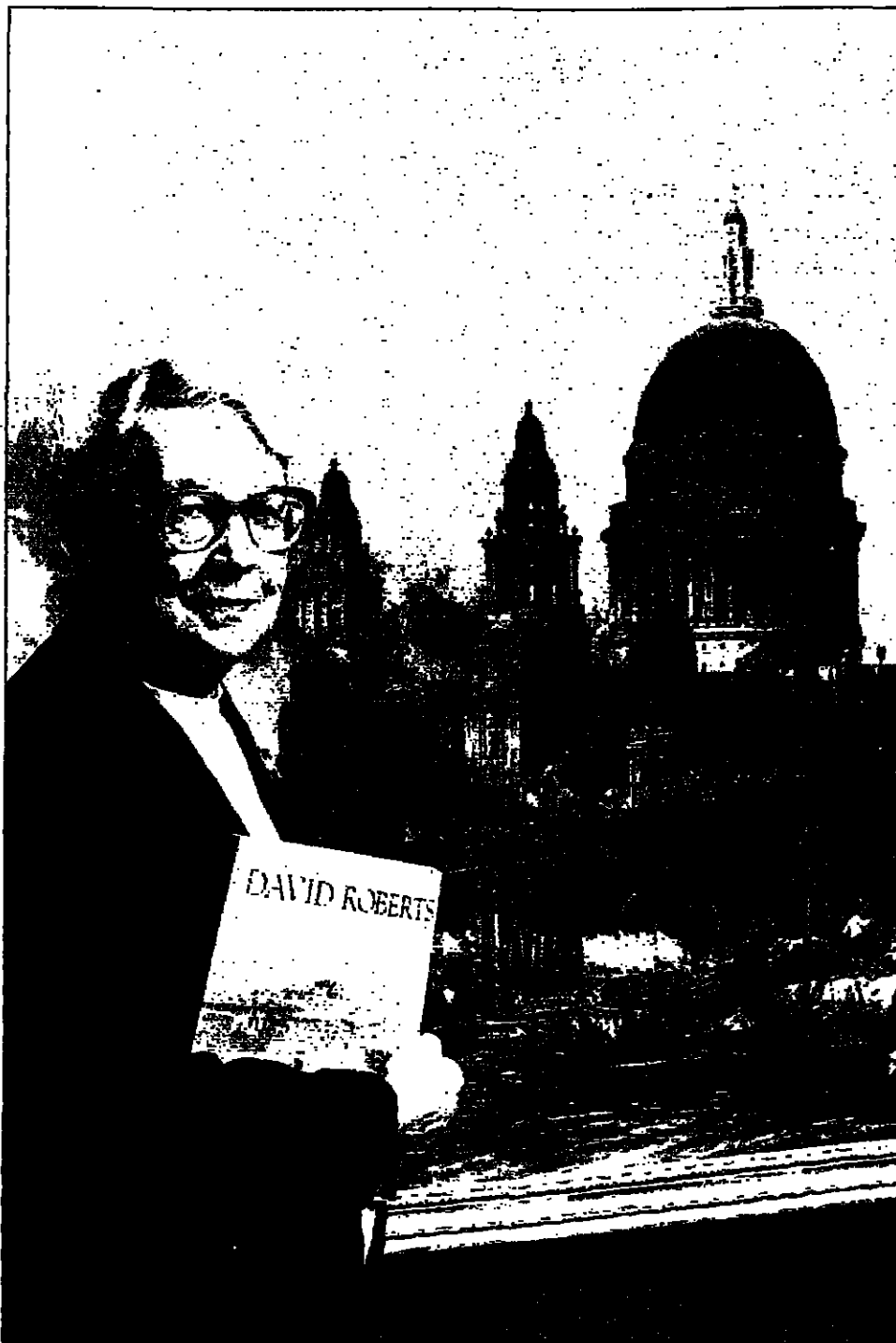
the London Borough of Haringey after the 1965 local government reorganisation. For both, until her retirement in 1978, her main work was designing colour schemes for school and accommodation projects, after which she did over five years part-time work with the Huguenot Society.

Roberts had then long been her main interest and she had built up, at very modest cost in present terms, a significant personal collection of (mainly) watercolours by him, his friends and contemporaries. She had very quickly also discovered that Roberts was a vivid and informative writer of both letters and autobiographical journals, which she located among his descendants by about 1963; she transcribed these and every other Roberts letter - eventually over 1,300 - that she could unearth in public and private sources here and abroad.

In 1967, her work supported a small exhibition at the Guildhall Art Gallery on Roberts and his friend and early fellow theatre painter Clarkson Stanfield: she herself lent works by both. Her own first intention was to publish Roberts's writings. However, by 1978, with no publisher interested, she issued at her own cost a 34-page illustrated "life", only to find in 1981 that Katharine Sim, an established author, was commissioned to write a full biography. To this she gave generous support and significantly reduced the errors in what is a good general account, but which even Sim admitted was done in some haste.

That year she also selected and catalogued the successful Scottish Arts Council touring exhibition "David Roberts - Artist Adventurer", which opened at the Birmingham Art Gallery before going on to the Fine Art Society, London, then to Paisley, Dundee and Edinburgh. By this time Guiterman was well-known to others with an interest in Roberts's various careers: as a young house decorator, a noted printer of stage scenery and panoramas, an artist traveller, or a well-known Scot in London in the circles of Turner and Dickens, among others.

She visited as many of the



Guiterman with David Roberts's *St Paul's from Blackfriars* at the artist's 1986 Barbican Gallery retrospective. Photograph: John Daniell

places Roberts painted as possible and in 1984 was awarded a British Academy grant to help support what had then become a project with Briony Llewellyn to publish a *catalogue raisonné*, backed by Phaidon and Christie's. With Llewellyn and Krystyna Majkiewicz as editor for Phaidon, she catalogued the impressively full Roberts retrospective exhibition held at the Barbican Art Gallery in 1986-87 but publishing difficulties have so far stalled the larger project, now being continued by her two collaborators.

Guiterman was then 70 and though she wrote several related further articles in *Turner Studies* (1987-90) and reprinted her own short biography

three times up to 1986, it was too late for anything bigger, though she continued work until forced to stop by failing health and eyesight in 1995.

Many of her Roberts and other drawings were on long loan to the Guildhall Art Gallery until 1985. She then withdrew the Roberts and some others but presented the gallery with the rest, comprising 106 pictures, many being by his contemporaries. In 1991 she gave 25 drawings including works by Stanfield, Cox, G.B. Campion, John Martin and Edward Lear to Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, and is believed to have made provision for other public bequests.

Helen Guiterman was an

amateur and enthusiast of the best sort: thoroughly determined in pursuit of her chosen interest but also unassuming about her knowledge and as generous in sharing it as she was with the pictures she collected. Her "Robertsiana" - both for the catalogue and the "collected writings" - will survive her and (one hopes) eventually see full publication. Such an outcome would be her monument as much as the one she wanted for David Roberts.

Pieter van der Merwe
Helen Mary Guiterman: designer, art collector, historian and benefactor: born Bournemouth, Dorset 9 January 1916; died Bournemouth 8 May 1998.

Professor Peter Jewell

SO MANY problems in biology require for their solution scientists who can cross between its sub-disciplines. Peter Jewell was such a one. Trained as a physiologist, he made his main contributions to ecology and conservation.

With two bachelor's degrees (in Agriculture from Reading and Physiology from Cambridge) and a Cambridge PhD in Physiology, Jewell held appointments as Lecturer in Pharmacology at the Royal Veterinary College, Research Fellow at the Zoological Society, Professor of Biology in Nigeria, Lecturer in Zoology at University College and Professor at the Royal Holloway College, London, and finally as Professor of the Physiology of Reproduction in Cambridge.

There are few who have contributed to so many fields of biology, yet there is a clear continuity between his early papers on dog and cat anatomy and pharmacology and his more recent papers on the ecology and conservation of large mammals. Perhaps closest to his heart were his contributions to animal conservation. Effective conservation requires a deep understanding of the physiological and behavioural requirements of the species in question, and Peter Jewell's early work on the physiology of drinking and eating, coupled with his love and understanding of animals, put him in a very strong position.

To these he could add insights acquired in a ground-breaking series of studies of the population dynamics and interspecies relations of small mammals on islands: these were among the first studies to use the re-trapping of marked animals to obtain data on how fecundity and breeding success varies with age. A visit to Africa in 1962 resulted in a series of papers by Jewell and his students on the ecology of African mammals, and on the management of large animals in game reserves, including reference to their interactions with the local human populations.

Of special importance were his studies of topi, a large African antelope, which demonstrated for the first time in mammals a flexibility in social organisation according to environmental conditions. His interest in human-animal relations also led him into archaeology, where he published a number of papers on animal re-

taining females, he was able to demonstrate the importance of female preference. Again, perplexed by the short life expectancy of the males, he was able to show that it was affected by their endocrine status: this experiment was completed only recently when the last male died at the considerable age of 19 years.

His enormous energy stood him in good stead in the field: a military paramedic called in when he was taken ill on St Kilda got a dusty answer when he tried to tell him that he was too old for fieldwork.

Jewell devoted a great deal of his time to helping and advising others, especially the many devoted students who were now making their own marks. He served on numerous academic committees, acting as a consultant in Britain and abroad, and assisting in surveys by the ODA and the EEC. But he was not only a scientist. His socialism and artistic interests gave him a fellow feeling for William Morris, and he not infrequently found himself in the position of defending the underprivileged. He enjoyed making his own greeting cards, and was keenly interested in ceramics.

Peter Jewell had been a student at St John's College, Cambridge, and he returned as a Fellow when appointed to his Cambridge Chair in 1977. He sat for a while on the College Council, and served on a number of college committees. His enthusiasm and his ability to listen, assimilate and reply made any discussion with him a pleasure: his unfailing good-humour and his kindness to both peers and juniors formed a lasting impression on all who knew him.

Jewell: human-animal relations



Peter Arundel Jewell, biologist: born London 16 June 1925; Lecturer, Royal Veterinary College (1950-60); Research Fellow, Zoological Society of London 1960-66; Professor of Biological Sciences, University of Nigeria 1966-67; Senior Lecturer and Director of Conservation Course, University College London 1967-72; Professor of Zoology, Royal Holloway College 1972-77; Mary Marshall & Arthur Walton Professor of the Physiology of Reproduction, Cambridge University 1977-92 (Emeritus); Fellow, St John's College, Cambridge 1977-98; married 1958 Juliet Cuttman-Brock (three daughters); died Cambridge 23 May 1998.

Robert A. Hinde

Peter Arundel Jewell, biologist: born London 16 June 1925; Lecturer, Royal Veterinary College (1950-60); Research Fellow, Zoological Society of London 1960-66; Professor of Biological Sciences, University of Nigeria 1966-67; Senior Lecturer and Director of Conservation Course, University College London 1967-72; Professor of Zoology, Royal Holloway College 1972-77; Mary Marshall & Arthur Walton Professor of the Physiology of Reproduction, Cambridge University 1977-92 (Emeritus); Fellow, St John's College, Cambridge 1977-98; married 1958 Juliet Cuttman-Brock (three daughters); died Cambridge 23 May 1998.

John Hawkes



Hawkes 'visionary' Photograph: Jerry Bauer

JOHN HAWKES was the author of 16 novels, including *The Cannibal*, *The Lime Twig*, *The Blood Oranges*, *Travesty* and *Adventures in the Alaskan Skin Trade*. An important figure in the post-war generation of American writers that includes John Barth, William Gaddis and William S. Burroughs, he once claimed that he wrote fiction "on the assumption that the true enemies of the novel were plot, character, setting and theme". He was one of the first writers in America to champion an iconoclastic "postmodern" or "metafictional" spirit in fiction, a spirit which insisted on formal experimentation, savage com-

edy and total imaginative freedom. Edmund White called him "America's greatest visionary".

Jack Hawkes was born in Stamford, Connecticut, in 1925, in his own words "an only child and an asthmatic". He went to Harvard in 1943 and a year later left for Europe to serve as an American Field Service ambulance driver in Italy and Germany. This first-hand experience of a Europe ravaged by war was seminal to the writing of his first novel, *The Cannibal*, which was published by James Laughlin at New Directions in 1949. It would come to be recognised as a classic of Second World War liter-

ature. Later, Hawkes would set many of his novels in Europe. In 1947 he married Sophie Tazewell, who became his lifelong literary collaborator and dedicatee of many of his books.

After the war he returned to Harvard and taught English there from 1955 to 1958. He then moved to Brown University, where he taught until his retirement in 1988. During those years he travelled constantly, and his wanderings were essential to what he called his "landscapes of the imagination". He tended to create in each of his novels a psychic territory of dark erotic turmoil charged with dread, terror and

bleak humour, but in prose of such sheer beauty as to redeem the often morbid vitality of the content.

The Lime Twig, published in 1961, is set in a seedy post-war England of racetracks, prostitutes and crooks, but was written before Jack had ever been here, deriving instead from the voices of British troops he encountered in the American Field Service. He wrote his "island novel" *Second Skin*, while living in the West Indies. His controversial 1971 novel *The Blood Oranges* was inspired by a stay in Greece, and his 1976 masterpiece *Travesty* takes place over the course of single night

as a car driven by an inspired madman speeds through the French countryside.

Hawkes spent a part of his boyhood in Alaska, and considered his 1985 novel *Adventures in the Alaskan Skin Trade* one of his most personal books. In France, where his work has a strong following, the book received one of the country's most distinguished literary awards, Le Prix Médicis Étranger.

The late novels, particularly *Sweet William* (1993), which is narrated by a horse, tend to a softness of tone and a melancholy not apparent in the more intense and fevered creations of the earlier decades. He never lost his appetite for the perverse and the fantastic. His penultimate novel, the lovely and delicate *The Frog* (1996), is about a child who swallows a frog which then becomes a living presence inside him. And his last, *An Irish Eye* (1997), is filled with richly complicated images of violence, decay, and the staining of innocence, as are all the most brilliant novels of the earlier years.

This complex, restless man was a warm and generous friend, a delightful companion at table, and a powerful influence not only on the many students he taught but on fiction

writers of later generations who fell upon his work with cries of joy, recognising that here was an artist with the elegance, the inventiveness and the grace to light the way into the mind's most unwarly regions.

Patrick McGrath

John Hawkes, writer: born Stamford, Connecticut 17 August 1925; Visiting Lecturer and Instructor, Harvard University 1955-58; Assistant Professor, Brown University 1958-62; Associate Professor 1962-67, Professor of English 1967-68, University Professor 1973-88 (Emeritus); married 1947 Sophie Tazewell (three sons, one daughter); died Providence, Rhode Island 15 May 1998.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

BIRTHS
MASON CLEMENTS: On 5 May to Peter and Jo, beautiful twins, Benedict George and Charlotte Alexandra, brother and sister for Alexander and grandchildren for Mary and Jim, Jackie and Bill.

TELEGRAMS: To Katy (née Playle) and Claude, on 21 May 1998 at Luton and Dunstable Hospital, Curtis Albert, a brother for Conrad.

DEATHS
AARONOVITCH: Sam, died peacefully 30 May. Funeral Friday 5 June 2pm at St Marylebone Crematorium, East End Road, N2. Details, telephone Sabrina 0181-902 6437.

CHENEVERIE: Selina Claire, beloved wife of Antoine and loving mother of Francesca, Tatiana and Alexander. Died peacefully on 2 June. Family Requiem Mass at St Edmund's, Bury, Service of Thanksgiving in London later.

de GZELL: Verna - artist - on 28 May at St John and St Elizabeth, St John's Wood. Funeral service at Russian Orthodox Cathedral, Euston Road, London, SW7, on 6 June at 11pm. Flowers (optional) to Lovettos.

LAKE: Isabella (née Symington) on 29 May, peacefully after a short illness. Widow of John, loving mother of Caroline and Kate, and grandmother of Charles, Buffy, George, Calum and Neil. Private funeral. No flowers please. Thanksgiving service for the lives of both John and Isabella to follow in Gatehouse of Fleet.

Birthdays

Dr Ernest Armstrong, Secretary, British Medical Association, 53; Mr Philip Attenborough, publisher, 62; Sir Robin Black, diplomat, 92; Sir Peter Bonfield, chairman, British Telecommunications, and chief executive, ICL, 54; Lord Brandon of Oakbrook, a former Lord of Appeal in Ordinary, 78; Mr Tony Curtis, actor, 73; Professor Richard D'Aeth, former editor, Hughes Hall, Cambridge, 86; Mr Timothy David, diplomat, 51; Mr Michael Elliott, MEP, 66; Miss Sheila Faith, former MP and MEP, 70; Dr Raoul Franklin, Vice-Chancellor, City University, 63; General Sir Michael Gow, former Commander, Royal College of Defence Studies, 74; Miss Anita Harris, singer and actress, 56; Air Marshal Sir John Harris, 60; Mrs June Lawrence, former Headmistress, Harrogate Ladies' College, 65; Mr Eddie McGrady MP, 63; Mr Colin Meads, rugby player, 62; Mr Michael Moore MP, 33; Sir Harry Pitt, former Vice-Chancellor, Reading University, 84; Miss Anita Pollack, MEP, 52; Miss Suzi Quatro, rock singer and actress, 48; M Alain Rosnais, film director, 76; Mr Jonathan Shaw MP, 32; Sir Wilfred Thesiger, explorer and writer, 88; Miss Penelope Wilton, actress, 51;

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Duke of Edinburgh, Patron of the British Cycling Association, opens a new bridge at the Essex and Suffolk Gliding Club, Worthington, Bedfordshire. The Duke of Gloucester, Patron, Connaught and Cambridge, and the Duchess of Kent, will visit the Royal Naval School of Maritime Studies, Portsmouth, Hampshire. The Duke of York, Patron, will visit the Royal Naval School of Maritime Studies, Portsmouth, Hampshire. The Duke of York, Patron, will visit the Royal Naval School of Maritime Studies, Portsmouth, Hampshire. The Duke of York, Patron, will visit the Royal Naval School of Maritime Studies, Portsmouth, Hampshire.

Cardinal Thomas Winning, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Glasgow, 73.

Anniversaries

Births: George V, King, 1865; Raoul Dufy, painter, 1877; Josephine Baker, singer, 1906. Deaths: Samuel Plimsoll, politician and social reformer, 1896; Franz Kafka, writer, 1924; Arthur Mitchell Ransome, critic and writer of children's books, 1967; Robert Morley, actor and playwright, 1992. On this day: the game of lacrosse was introduced into Britain from Montreal, 1876; third-class travel on British Railways was abolished, 1956. Today is the Feast Day of St Cecilia, St Charles Lwanga, St Clothilde, St Genesius of Clermont, St Isaac of Cordova, St Joseph Maza, St Kevin or Coemgen, St Liphardus and Urbicus, St Lucilian and his Companions, St Morand and Saints Perpetuus and Laurentius.

Lectures

Tate Gallery: Michael Phillips, "Darkness Visible: Blake's Lambeth period and the biographer's quest". Victoria and Albert Museum: Kate Hay, "Chairs for a Purpose: 18th to 19th centuries", 2.30pm.

Changing of the Guard

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment on the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am. The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment on the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am. The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment on the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

LAW REPORT: 3 JUNE 1998

Meaning of 'good marketable title' in undertaking

Barclays Bank plc v Weeks Legg & Dean (a firm); Barclays Bank plc v Layton Lougher & Co (a firm); Barclays Bank plc v N E Hopkin John & Co (a firm); Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Millett, Lord Justice Pill and Lord Justice May) 21 May 1998

IN A STANDARD form undertaking given to a bank by a purchaser's solicitor to facilitate the completion of a contract for the sale of land, whereby the solicitor undertook to apply any sums received solely for acquiring "good marketable title", the expression "good marketable title" did not mean "a freehold title free from encumbrances".

The Court of Appeal so held on the hearing of three appeals concerning the proper construction of a standard form of undertaking given by solicitors to Barclays Bank plc.

The undertaking was in a form agreed between the Law Society and the banks,

and contained the following undertakings:

(a) that any sums received from you or your customer for the purpose of this transaction will be applied solely for acquiring a good marketable title to such property and in paying any necessary deposit legal costs and disbursements in connection with such purpose. The purchase price contemplated is £... gross and with all necessary stamping and registration completed to send the title deeds and/or land certificates and documents to you and in the meantime to hold them to your order.

In each of the three cases the bank had brought an action for damages against the solicitor who had given the undertaking, claiming that the solicitor had parted with the money on completion of the purchase of the relevant property but had failed to obtain a title to the property which provided satisfactory security for the bank.

Simon Berry QC, Jonathan Nash,

Nigel Jones and Michael Sullivan (Everheds) for the bank; Mark Haggood QC and Richard McManus (Blake Lopham), Peter Cranfield (Wansborough Willey Hargrave) and David Halpern (Morgan Bruce) for the solicitors.

Lord Justice Millett said that the following issues arose on the appeals: the meaning to be attributed to the expression in the undertaking "for acquiring a good marketable title to the property"; and whether the obligation which the solicitors assumed by giving the undertaking was an absolute or a qualified obligation.

The subject-matter of a sale of land and the vendor's duty to prove his title to the subject-matter of the sale were two quite separate questions. The obligation of a vendor was to deduce sufficient title to the property which he had contracted to sell. The expression "good marketable title" described the quality of the evidence which the purchaser was

bound to accept as sufficient to discharge that obligation. It said nothing about the nature or extent of the property contracted to be sold to which title had to be deduced.

The expression was a compound one which described the title and not the property, and where it was contained in a contract for the sale of land, it meant "to the property contracted to be sold". In the present cases it was not contained in a contract for sale or in a communication between vendor and purchaser, but in a separate document provided by the purchaser's solicitor to a third party. The property was described in the undertaking in order to enable the parties to identify the transaction to which the undertaking related, not the property which the purchaser was acquiring. It was not necessary for the full particulars of the property together with the rights with and subject to which it was being sold to be set out in the undertaking, but was suf-

ficient for the property to be described in terms sufficient to enable the relevant transaction to be identified.

The undertaking was, therefore, to be construed as an undertaking not to part with the money except for a good marketable title to the property which was the subject of the transaction briefly described in the document.

Further, the undertaking ought to be construed as subjecting the solicitor to qualified obligation only, i.e. to obtain in exchange for the money what a reasonably competent solicitor acting with proper skill and care would accept as a good marketable title. That would bring his obligations under the undertaking into conformity with his obligations to his own client as well as with his trust obligations to the bank, and would not involve exposing him to a liability which no solicitor could properly be advised to accept.

Kate O'Hanlon, Barrister

مكتبا من ألاكصل

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN
EDITED BY ANDREW YATESRight signals
from Vodafone

THIS IS a bull market, and one of the sectors the market is most bullish about is telecoms. If you're in a business that involves people picking up phones it seems that valuations are no longer important.

Nothing could better demonstrate this than yesterday's reaction to Vodafone's full-year results. Here is a stock that has already almost trebled in value in the past 12 months. But faced with slightly better than expected pre-tax profits of £650m – a 21 per cent rise – investors merely pushed Vodafone shares up 25p to a new all-time high of 713p.

On profit forecasts for this year of £830m, the shares now trade on a multiple of 42 times this year's expected earnings – more than double the rating of the market. Vodafone's growth prospects are good, but are they that attractive?

Based on the UK business, probably not. Vodafone is the largest and longest-established operator, but other competitors are muscling in. So Vodafone has to keep cutting charges and offering new services to hang on to its subscribers. The next generation of mobile licences, to be auctioned off next summer, will provide an opportunity to sell a range of new services. But until those are in place, last year's 8 per cent growth in profits is about all Vodafone can hope for.

The overseas businesses, however, are a different story. Vodafone has long insisted that its investments in mobile licences from Sweden to Uganda had huge promise. Now those ventures are beginning to pay off. Profits from continental Europe more than quadrupled to £137.9m, although losses in the Pacific Rim deepened to £59.2m.

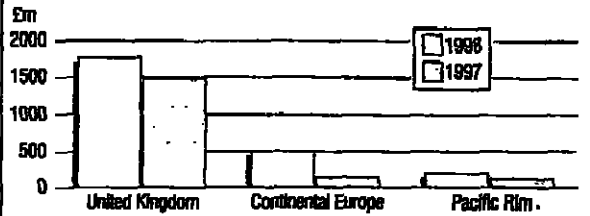
Vodafone has other investments in its sights, and although its balance sheet gearing is approaching 300

Vodafone: At a glance

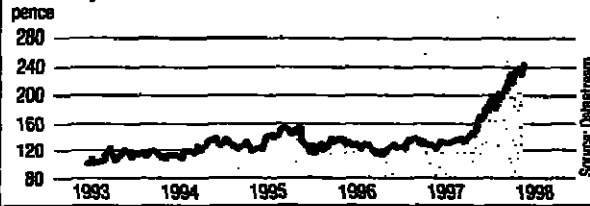
Market value: £22.0bn, share price 713p (+25p)

Trading record	94	95	96	97	98
Turnover (£m)	0.85	1.15	1.40	1.75	2.47
Pre-tax profits (£m)	363	371	475	538	650
Earnings per share (p)	8.1	7.8	10.2	11.9	13.6
Dividends per share (p)	2.78	3.34	4.01	4.87	5.36

Turnover



Share price



per cent it has further borrowing facilities to draw on. Given the current state of the market, shareholders would also happily fork out more cash if Vodafone needs it.

Make no mistake, this stock is expensive. But the company's track record and prospects justify that rating. If you want exposure to the telecoms sector, Vodafone is a good long-term play.

Standards
slip at Siebe

SIEBE is a victim of its own success. It's not often that the announcement of record profits leads to a dramatic fall in the share price. But Siebe is supposed to be a class act with high standards, and those standards have slipped.

The engineering giant's share price fell 126p to 1377p yesterday after pre-tax profits came in at £486m, a rise of 14.7 per cent, but below the £500m some analysts had expected.

The company was hurt by the downturn in the Far East

and the strength of the pound and dollar. But the City was also worried by a slowdown in organic growth during the second half of the year.

Moreover, analysts were shaken by the high cost of restructuring and the fact that Siebe says £100m more must be spent on heavy cuts over the next two years, when it plans to cut 4,000 jobs world-wide.

This is the downside of Siebe's recent flurry of acquisitions. In the past year, it has spent £1.3bn on deals that include APV, the industrial processing group, and Eurotherm, the controls maker. Bedding down those buys will cost money.

Chief executive Allen Yurko believes the pound and dollar will remain strong for some time. To counter this and other problems – like a squeeze on prices as a result of deflation – some manufacturing will be shifted to lower-cost areas.

Six months ago Mr Yurko was bullish about the Far East but he admitted yesterday he plans to shift away from the region.

Analysts have downgraded their 1998 profit estimates to about £545m. This gives Siebe a forward multiple of 20 times. High enough.

Filofax bid
hopes dashed

ROBIN FIELD, Filofax's chief executive, yesterday quietly killed off shareholders' hopes of a takeover bid or even a profitable joint venture that would revive the lagging fortunes of this once-trendy Eighties icon. "After a thorough exploration of several possibilities we have determined there is not such opportunity in the short term and these discussions have now been terminated," said Mr Field, who replaces founder David Collis as chairman in July. The shares promptly lost 10 per cent of their value, dropping 17.5p to 161.5p.

Results for the year to March were also disappointing. In spite of the impact of the strong pound, profits from continuing operations rose 7 per cent to £6.1m. However, this was wiped out by a £7m exceptional hit on the loss-making greetings card business Henry Ling, sold at the end of the year.

Drakes, the office stationery business, saw sales of its own-label stationery dwindle to almost nothing. Filofax's time management business suffered while a contract to produce gift catalogues for BT was cancelled.

The group is now clearly focused on the ring-binder organiser market, where margins are still high and buoyant overseas markets now account for 60 per cent of sales. Analysts have trimmed forecasts for the current year to £6.7m, putting the shares on a forward p/e ratio of less than 10. Although there are no bids on the table at present, the hope must be that a predator – possibly a financial buyer – will see some value in Filofax. For that reason, the shares are worth a punt.

Alstom will be valued
at £4.6m in share offer

By Michael Harrison

ALSTOM, the power engineering and rail transport group owned by GEC and Alcatel of France, is to be valued at up to £4.6m when its global share offering takes place this month.

The valuation is higher than expected and compares with the £4bn figure previously indicated by the two parent companies. Shares in Alstom, which is floating simultaneously on the Paris, London and New York markets, will be priced in a range of FF190 to FF220.

News of the pricing range came as Alstom announced that its board would be strengthened by the appointment of three high-profile non-executive directors, led by Sir

William Purves of HSBC, who will be vice-chairman. The other two are Dr Klaus Esser, the vice-chairman of Mannesmann, the German engineering and electronics group, and Jacques de Larosiere de Champfen, the former governor of the Banque de France and managing director of the International Monetary Fund.

GEC and Alcatel intend to float between 52 and 58 per cent of the company. Shareholders in the two parent companies will be entitled to apply for up to 20 per cent of the shares issued which, depending on the level of subscription, could leave them with up to 10 per cent of the company.

Alstom's 110,000 employees will be entitled to apply for a further 2 per cent of the shares at

a 20 per cent discount to the strike price.

The strike price will be determined by a single global book building run by CSFB and Goldman Sachs. No tranches of shares will be allocated to any particular geographic market. Nor will there be a public offer of the shares in the UK although French private investors will be able to apply through the global offering.

Alstom, led by its chairman and chief executive Pierre Bilger, will raise 300m euros of new money from the flotation and is expected to have at least £1bn to play with to finance acquisitions once it is complete.

The company is one of the biggest train manufacturers in the world. It supplies the French TG and Eurostars and



Pierre Bilger, whose firm will have £1bn to play with

is part of a consortium with Fiat which will make high-speed tilting trains for the Virgin West Coast Mainline. Its other interests include power stations, electrical transmission equipment and ships. Shares in Alstom are due to begin trading on 22 June.

£100m bonus
for MEPC's
shareholders

By Andrew Verity

MEPC, the property group, yesterday promised to return an extra £100m to shareholders after completing a £1bn sale of its overseas businesses.

The group will repay £400m by issuing a bonus of redeemable "B" shares, using the rest of the proceeds of the sale to fund a £550m development programme in the UK. Originally, only £300m had been expected.

The extra capital will reward shareholders who have in the last year put MEPC under intense pressure to sharpen the focus of its corporate strategy.

Since last September, the group has mounted a wholesale restructuring, ditching its US and Australian operations and buying UK property.

In February the group sold its Australian portfolio for A\$418 (£157m) – a price lower than hoped because markets were depressed by the impact of the Asian crisis. By the end of April, it had also sold its US

portfolio for \$1.315m (£807m), considered a reasonable price.

In the same period since September, MEPC has sought to refocus on properties which will bring a higher investment return, buying £685m of UK property and selling holdings worth £650m.

The group said it remained optimistic about prospects for UK property prices. Occupier demand was particularly strong in the south-east office market, the company said.

James Tuckey, chief executive, said: "We have delivered on everything we said we were going to." He said gearing had been reduced to 65 per cent, allowing the company to complete developments in the UK. He expects the company to spend £250m over the next year and a further £300m before the end of the year 2000. The £2.3bn group has recruited a new chairman, Sir John Egan, to replace Michael Blakenham at the beginning of August. Sir John is currently chairman of BAA, the airports business.

PEOPLE &
BUSINESSJOHN
WILLCOCK

FASHION retailers will no longer be able to blame declining sales figures on cool, damp summers, and power generators will be blocked from justifying poor revenues on a mild winter, if Mahmud Bhatti has his way.

Mr Bhatti, senior class underwriter at Brockbank, the biggest underwriting agency at Lloyd's of London, is spearheading the firm's new product – "Weather Stabilisation Insurance" (WSI).

In a country where the changeable weather is a source of constant conversation, Brockbank is offering to recompense companies which lose revenue when it rains instead of shines.

Or vice versa. Mr Bhatti says that oil and gas companies will be able to insure against mild winters which reduce heating bills for customers, while retailers of soft drinks, ice cream and beer will be able to take a policy out against rain-soaked summers.

The market for the WSI policies

"could be worth hundreds of millions of dollars", says Mr Bhatti. He has already sold one policy to an energy company in the US, and is expecting big interest from the UK.

Brockbank will repay lost revenues to companies if the temperature falls outside independently estimated norms on specified days, he says. However, he does not expect much interest for the product in "monotone temperature" countries such as Saudi Arabia.

WHATEVER you made of Siebe's annual results yesterday, the engineering group certainly doesn't look on the way to winning a "Plain English" award.

Allen Yurko, Siebe's chief executive, described the company's £100m re-jig, which will axe 4,000 jobs over the next two years, as "an accelerated facility restructuring and acquisition integration programme".

FORGET Gazza and his illicit kebabs. Scotland have already won the 1998 World Cup in France, I can exclusively reveal.

Logica, the IT consultancy, holds its own football world cup every year, and last week the venue was Bordeaux. The tournament attracted nine teams with over 100 players drawn from Logica's offices around the globe.

Scotland beat Italy one-nil in the final, thus ensuring themselves sporting immortality. And the whole team were real Scots, I am assured, drawn from Logica's Aberdeen and Edinburgh offices.

Ominously, there was no word of how England fared. Is this an omen for the real thing? Pass the chilli sauce...

IT'S a tough job, but someone's got to do it. Dr Kim Howells, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Lifelong Learning at the Department for Education and Employment (try fitting that on your busi-

ness card), yesterday visited the Chez Gerard restaurant in London's Covent Garden.

Dr Howells found time to make some of the pome fruits which were then consumed at lunch at the restaurant, one of 14 new Chez Gerard in London opened recently.

The lunching was all in a good cause, I'm glad to say. The restaurant group is doubling its annual training and recruitment spend to £350,000 in an attempt to create over 100 jobs a year, a move welcomed by the Government.

Neville Abraham, chairman and chief executive of Groupe Chez Gerard, commented: "In today's tight labour market looking after staff means investing more money in training and development."

Meanwhile further north in London the refurbished Sadlers Wells theatre is in the process of being reopened after an ambitious refurbishment, together with a new Chez Gerard restaurant just down the road. According to the Groupe's deputy chairman, Laurence Isaacson, the restaurant and theatre form a "pas de deux".

SOME role switches are going on in the financial sector. Julie Baddeley, formerly a partner of Andersen Consulting and "in charge of a substantial part of its change practice in Europe", is joining the Woolwich as an executive director.

And David Reid Scott, who played a key role in the development of Phoenix, the London-based corporate finance boutique, has joined Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette, the American investment bank, as a vice chairman of the European Investment Banking Group.

Mr Reid Scott will help develop business alongside Cliff Hampton in the Financial Institutions Group, and will develop clients across the European Investment Banking Group, with special emphasis on mergers and acquisitions.

COMPANY RESULTS

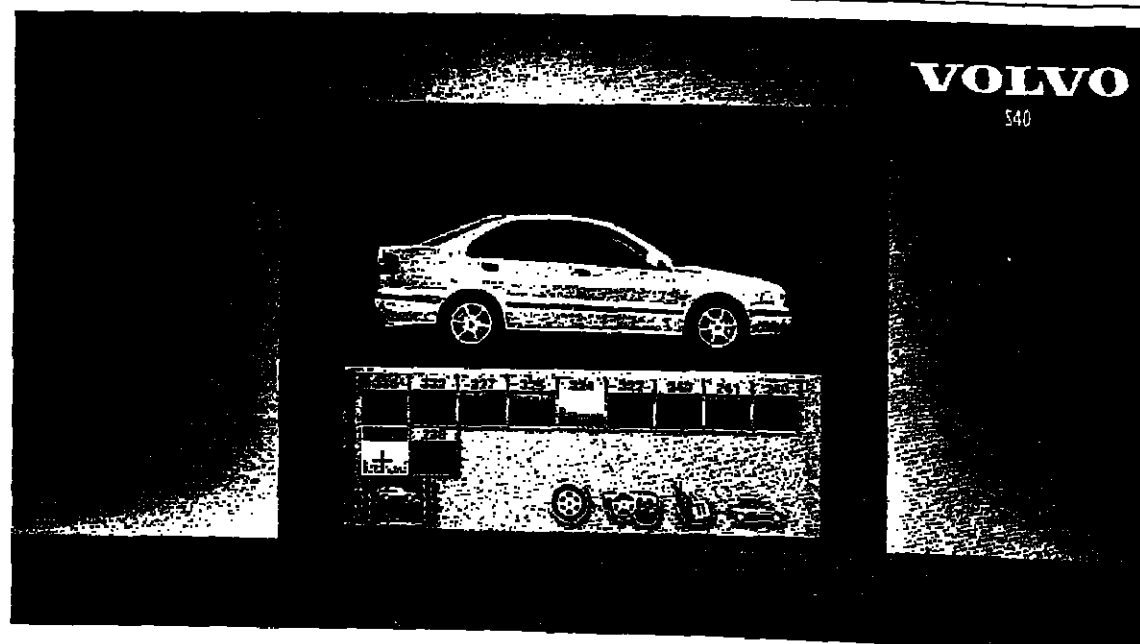
	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Anglo Metals (I)	42.03m (35.58m)	2.803m (1.912m)	5.7p (4.0p)	1.8p (1.45p)
Asda Group (F)	282.0m (288.0m)	-7.88m (-14.14m)	-12.2p (-27.2p)	nil (nil)
Dale Lane (F)	9.88m (8.91m)	0.847m (0.585m)	16.32p (10.58p)	2.3p (2.3p)
Cheniered (F)	5.511m (4.72m)	60.9m (70.8m)	- (-)	- (-)
Character Group (I)	38.51m (21.05m)	4.52m (2.25m)	16.32p (7.38p)	1.45p (1.2p)
Chemex Int'l (I)	1.06m (1.03m)	0.055m (0.133m)	0.16p (0.33p)	nil (nil)
Osprey Crest (F)	787.4m (787.2m)	40.6m (36.5m)	25.7p (22.4p)	10.9p (9.9p)
De La Rue (F)	790.2m (768.2m)	67.2m (60.5m)	30.8p (24.4p)	12.0p (24.0p)
Encompass (I)	17.03m (16.65m)	-4.32m (-4.66m)	-8.3p (-8.9p)	4.9p (-)
Entenopy (I)	12.28m (23.18m)	0.627m (2.44m)	0.82p (3.27p)	0.45p (0.93p)
Fluhal (F)	42.20m (43.90m)	-0.982m (5.915m)	-8.4p (13.7p)	4.07p (3.70p)
GB Railways (SP)	105.19m (88.65m)	3.05m (3.22m)	33.4p (25.7p)	5.0p (-)
Grainstore Group (I)	1024.8m (218.1m)	25.26m (21.71m)	11.1p (9.4p)	2.85p (2.9p)
Landwood (I)	1.23m (0.473m)	0.405m (0.158m)	6.3p (-)	1.5p (-)
MEPC (I)	- (-)	108.1m (2.5m)	16.9p (0.8p)	4.0p (6.25p)
Morrisons Country (F)	329.70m (300.03m)	20.63m (16.23m)	20.27p (15.97p)	5.85p (-)
National Grid (F)	1.70m (1.15m)	574.8m (581.4m)	26.1p (24.4p)	12.07p (11.13p)
Ordnance Instruments (F)	199.34m (174.99m)	15.84m (22.97m)	22.2p (30.0p)	8.1p (-)
Pleasant (F)	33.5m (33.4m)	-8.121m (1.863m)	-41.98p (10.25p)	nil (nil)
Shah (F)	3.67m (3.00m)	486.4m (424.1m)	62.0p (54.1p)	16.2p (14.7p)
Thames Water (F)	1.38m (1.25m)	418.8m (371.8m)	90.7p (82.8p)	38.4p (24.4p)
Uthmaniyah (I)	57.73m (32.83m)	6.14m (3.86m)	4.7p (3.7p)	1.45p (0.80p)
Woolwich Group (F)	6.23m (2.01m)	0.672m (-1.878m)	0.16p (-6.10p)	- (-)

(F) = Final (I) = Interim (SP) = Split * EPS is pre-exceptional * Dividend to be paid as a RD

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THE stock market return of

DEREK PAIN

The index distortions were

The distortion created by the 2,500 Royal Sun sale mere-

Lloyds TSB rose 12p to 887p despite profit downgradings from ABN Amro and Schroders on pension misselling. The two houses

share price, pence

Bass, Cadbury Schweppes and SmithKline Beecham largely brushed aside the fizzy drinks scare but building shares, on the back of profit upgradings, edged ahead. Newcomer James R Knowles, a construction support group, ended at 96.5p against an 85p

Powerscreen, the troubled engineer, endured another bruising session, falling 22p to 65.5p; the shares were 762.5p in October.

LIBERFABRICA, formerly Bath Press, held at 18p, just above its year's low. Stockbroker Redmayne Bentley is keen on the shares. It believes profits for the year to end March will jump from £5.5m to £6.9m. The low rating accorded the shares leaves the company vulnerable to a takeover strike.



Share Price Data

Prices are in morning session where stated. The yield is the latest twelve months' declared gross dividend as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the descriptive figure by last year's earnings per share, including extraordinary items but excluding non-recurring items. Other details: R: rights; S: dividend; E: Extra; S: Suspend; P: Parity; Pay: on Nil Paid; A/N: Shares are Bloomberg Generic.

Source: Bloomberg

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0891 calls cost 50p per min.

Seqq volume: 838.3m trades 60,120

Gifts index

Market Leaders: Top 20 volumes

as at 28/01/92

Symbol	Price	Vol	Stock	Vol	Stock	Vol	Stock	Vol	Stock
ASX	3507.9	11,500	582.2	Down	16.6	15,000	580.5	Up	0.9
Q20	580.5	Down	24.4	1,200	582.7	Down	10.8	16,000	582.8
R200	582.5	Down	2.6	0,000	582.5	Down	2.6	Close	582.2

FTSE 100 index hour by hour

Symbol	Price	Vol	Stock	Vol	Stock	Vol	Stock	Vol	Stock
ASX	3507.9	11,500	582.2	Down	16.6	15,000	580.5	Up	0.9
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32 weeks High Low Stock

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23	D	James Porter	195.50	—	5.0	9.8	2368
24	F	Libertad	18.00	—	2.8	7.8	7991

[illegible]

40	Alcoa Inc.	176.00	-0.00	175.83	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.00	149.0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source: **Bloomberg**

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Japanese leave Miura at home

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Rain dampens Empire's day

By Greg Wood

IT WAS supposed to be the day when white smoke finally emerged from within the Ballydoyle stable as Aidan O'Brien decided which of his talented gang of three-year-olds would contest the Derby on Saturday. In the end, however, a dark cloud over Epsom ensured that the guessing must go on for another day or so at least.

Both King Of Kings, the 2,000 Guineas winner, and Second Empire, the ante-post Derby favourite, were put to work by Mick Kinane at Ballydoyle yesterday, with the results appearing to confirm the general assumption that Kinane will partner Second Empire on Saturday.

O'Brien, however, could not hide his concern at the news that 5mm of rain had fallen at Epsom on Monday night.

"It was a very wet here this morning," O'Brien said, "and I believe it's the same over there which would worry me a little because Second Empire and King Of Kings have both shown their best form on good ground." The rain also increases the likelihood that Saratoga Springs, who finished fourth in the French Derby on Sunday, will miss the Classic. "It looks as if Saratoga Springs won't be going to Epsom now, particularly as he wouldn't be stabled by soft ground," the trainer said.

Officially, the ground in Surrey is still good, and you can be

fairly sure that so long as the Queen does not need a snorkel and flippers to reach the Royal box on Saturday, the word "good" will still be in the description somewhere. This is yet another example of an age-old

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Gabiesea
(Beverley 6.40)
NB: Legal Issue
(Beverley 7.40)

problem, given that the clerk of the course is in the impossible position of trying to attract as attractive a field as possible while also keeping the public fully informed about the state of the ground.

Without the official pen-

etrometer readings which the French seem to have so little trouble providing, punters will always treat the official assessments with a modicum of suspicion. The only way anyone can be absolutely sure of the situation is to travel to Epsom and walk the course in person, and this option may become steadily more attractive if the unsettled weather continues until race day.

O'Brien is not the only trainer who feels the elements may conspire to ruin many months of careful preparation. John Dunlop, who will saddle Haami on Saturday, knows only too well that the colt was a disappointment when running on soft ground last season. "We

would be concerned if it became too wet because Haami really wants fast ground," Angus Gold, Hamdan al Maktoum's racing manager, said yesterday. "Richard Hills felt the horse couldn't pick up at a crucial stage on the dead ground at Newmarket [when fifth in the 2,000 Guineas] and would definitely prefer faster ground. It doesn't want to be too wet for Epsom, it takes it away from the race, but we're in the lap of the gods."

Haami's owner also has Mutamam among the 10 remaining entries, and he might prefer a little cut in the ground. "If it became too wet then there is the option that Richard [Hills] could switch to Mutamam but



Mick Kinane: Derby delay

he is not a certain runner," Gold said. "Although he hasn't run on extremes of going he wouldn't mind it soft."

The participation of another outsider, 200-1 chance Pegnitz, has also yet to be decided. The colt is still a maiden after five outings but, as he is trained by the famously optimistic Clive Brittain, it is fair to assume he will take his place this weekend.

Newcastle

2.20 Hot Steamer 2.50 Cruiser 3.20 Palacegate

JACK 3.50 Top Jam 4.20 Andover 4.55 Faresse Brave

GOING: Good (Good to Soft in places). STALLS: Inside. DRAW ADVANTAGE: High best for 51 (except in heavy going).
©Course is 1m 10 of town. Motor service to Four Lane Ends station. Club 21 (C for OAPs and registered disabled). Tel: 0191 274 1234. Club 22 (C for OAPs and registered disabled). Tel: 0191 274 1235. Club 23 (C for OAPs and registered disabled). Tel: 0191 274 1236. Club 24 (C for OAPs and registered disabled). Tel: 0191 274 1237. Club 25 (C for OAPs and registered disabled). Tel: 0191 274 1238. Club 26 (C for OAPs and registered disabled). Tel: 0191 274 1239. Club 27 (C for OAPs and registered disabled). Tel: 0191 274 1240. Club 28 (C for OAPs and registered disabled). Tel: 0191 274 1241. Club 29 (C for OAPs and registered disabled). Tel: 0191 274 1242. Club 30 (C for OAPs and registered disabled). Tel: 0191 274 1243. Club 31 (C for OAPs and registered disabled). Tel: 0191 274 1244. Club 32 (C for OAPs and registered disabled). Tel: 0191 274 1245. Club 33 (C for OAPs and registered disabled). Tel: 0191 274 1246. Club 34 (C for OAPs and registered disabled). Tel: 0191 274 1247. 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Steadfast Stewart takes centre stage with confidence

England's cricket captain intends to be his own man. Derek Pringle hears his plans for a new era

FOR the first time in almost five years, somebody other than Michael Atherton will be walking out to flip the coin on England's behalf. Fifty-one Tests is a long time to be under another, but Alec Stewart is about to step from beneath his predecessor's shadow and embark on a journey that even he was beginning to think he'd never make.

As adventures go, captaining England at cricket is not known for its bump-free ride. Stewart may be a veteran batsman of 74 Tests, but as captains go, he is still a chrysalis. When he walks out with Hansie Cronje tomorrow, butterflies he long thought extinct will flutter once more.

Nothing can prepare you for the skipper's job, the most exposed of all sports. All talk of captaining school sides and county juniors, or even county first teams (Stewart has done them all) cannot equip you for the harsh light of the spotlight about to pick out your every nuance, blemish and quirk. As for the more obvious things like success and failure, they will be hung high for public consumption on a grand scale - at least when the dust in France and Galle has finally settled.

A sensible and proud family man, Stewart, now 35, does at least know what he is letting himself in for - something Atherton, only 25 when he was appointed in 1993, patently did not. With Dad having played for England as well as captaining Surrey, Stewart has long been aware of what is expected.

"There was always cricket chat about the house," explained Stewart. "In fact, there still is, and his advice to me as England captain is to ensure that my performance with bat and gloves are good. That way, the other part will hopefully become easier."

Stewart says he has been around long enough to know how international cricket works. But while that experience may



Alec Stewart, in the Long Room at the Oval, contemplates his first Test as the new England captain, which starts tomorrow against South Africa at Edgbaston

Photograph: Lawrence Griffiths/Allsport

help him avoid some of the pitfalls, it will not necessarily help him find a route to the peak, which is where England must find themselves - with or without match-winning bowlers - for his captaincy to be considered a success.

"South Africa's record," he concedes, "says they are a hard team to beat, and we'll have to play to our full potential to win the series. In the past we've played winning cricket, though too many indifferent matches have meant it has been the exception rather than the rule. As captain I'll be trying to make sure that ratio improves to the point where we are more successful."

Educated, at least in the cricketing sense, via Surrey's swinging school of old pros, Stewart straddles two eras. It may explain why he upholds the traditional standards of tie and blazer while indulging in the sharper modern practices of gamesmanship, such as appealing when the ball has passed, but not actually taken, the edge of the bat.

However, the fact that he is no angel - despite the blonde hair and juttingly clean shaven chin - is a good thing. Providing the old farts and the constant drip drip of Lord MacLaurin's "image is everything" don't emasculate him completely, England will hope-

fully begin to flex the spine they had begun to find under Atherton.

"I'm not going to change the way I play just because I'm England captain," Stewart said. "I've played Test cricket for eight years and I believe I play hard and fair. In any case, as Atherton said the other day, the most important thing is to win. If you do that, the microscope is not so harsh."

Interference from outside the dressing-room, can present a problem to any captain. Apart from the sapping demands of keeping wicket and batting in the top four - which surely threaten to spread even his supreme energy and focus too thinly - one

of Stewart's potential flaws is that he is a populist.

In a game where so-called experts seemingly outnumber the playing population 100 to 1, it is easy to become disoriented, even by well intended advice, and if there is one rule his predecessor insists he should adhere to, it is to be his own man.

"I'm definitely going to do it my way," he insists, a victim no doubt of the recent aural pummelling handed out in recent weeks by Old Blue Eyes' signature tune. "You might see a bit of Atherton, or a bit of Gooch, or any of the captains I've played under. It's inevitable really as you absorb his and pieces from everyone."

Captaining his country is something Stewart has always wanted, a desire in his case that comes from deep in the genes more than from any craving for power. "I don't want any of the players to look at me differently now I'm skipper," he says. "I'm determined to remain the same open person in the dressing-room that I always have been."

Ambition can be a dirty word, especially in cricket, where it is better dressed up in sheep's clothing than presented in its naked state. However, although a conspicuous lack of trumpet blowing on Stewart's part perhaps betrays his need to conform in the past, the dream never faded. Indeed,

when I interviewed him in New Zealand 14 months ago, he still harboured desires to captain England.

Having been close once before, when Graham Gooch resigned in 1993, Stewart probably reasoned he could be close again, despite having been replaced as vice-captain by Nasser Hussain, ironically his only rival following Atherton's resignation.

A swell-chested patriot - something else he inherited from Dad - Stewart can assume what most other captains have to earn: the undying loyalty and respect of his players. As a hard worker in the Gooch mould, he will also expect oth-

ers to match his exacting standards of preparation and fitness. But hard work, so often the disguise for other weaknesses, has been tried before with only sporadic success. Surely it was time to admit that while England have become less prone to collapse, they still lack the ruthless streak that divides the cricket world into its two distinct species - predators and prey?

"As someone who has played Grade cricket in Perth as well as many Test matches against them, I respect the Aussies enormously. More than any other team, they recognise the moment to go in for the kill. If we are going to compete, that is what we must do."

Yifter the Shifter in Gebrselassie's sights

Second delay to Jackson's jumping



Haile Gebrselassie: Best yet to come

Photograph: AP

IT IS a measure of Haile Gebrselassie's talent that he regarded his reclamation of the World 10,000 metres record in Hengelo on Monday evening as little more than a statement of intent.

After setting the new mark of 26min 22.75sec in his first outdoor run of the season - with the encouragement of a partisan Dutch crowd and a deafening loudspeaker rendition of his favourite techno track, "Scatman" - he spoke about his plans to run even faster. "I wanted to run 26.20, or maybe 26.15 tonight," he said. "I know I can do it. And I will."

Asked if he could go under 26 minutes, he smiled and then said: "Why not? 25.59, that would be nice."

While that landmark may be out of reach of an athlete who, at 25, has already set 13 world records, you would not bet against him improving on his time in a season where he will not be distracted by any major championships.

"All the hard work he has done will pay off. He will go faster," said Gebrselassie's

Mike Rowbottom reports on the Ethiopian world-record holder aiming to take distance running to new techno-driven heights

Dutch manager, Jos Hermens, who added that the World and Olympic 10,000m champion needed the music to keep the tempo during his record attempts.

Spectators on the European circuit had better prepare themselves for further techno barges. Gebrselassie plans to run all six IAAF Golden League meetings this season, and will almost certainly seek to regain his world 5,000m record in Zurich.

He claimed that mark at the Swiss meeting last August, holding off Daniel Komen with a late burst of speed. But within nine days, the 21-year-old Kenyan had surpassed him, setting the current mark of 12min 39.74sec at the Brussels meeting. Within the space of an hour, Gebrselassie also lost his tenure on the 10,000m record as Komen's fellow-countryman Paul Tergat ran 26:27.85.

"I said to my friend, 'This is not my day'," Gebrselassie recalled. He vowed to regain both records, and now he is half way there.

But it looks as though he may not be pushed to further athletic heights this year by Komen, who was reported to have said at the weekend that he would not be running directly against the Ethiopian this season. Their rivalry, it seems, must be fought out at a distance as was the case with Seb Coe and Steve Ovett in the 1980s. However, Gebrselassie, just 5ft 4in and weighing less than nine stone, appears to be up for direct competition. "If he wants to run against me, he can," he said.

His deepest motivation is in representing the people of Ethiopia. In a country where people are among the poorest in the world, Gebrselassie is a hero and his accomplishments

were marked in February by the award of the Jesse Owens International Trophy at a ceremony in New York.

His ultimate ambition is to emulate his own hero, fellow Ethiopian Miruts Yifter in winning the Olympic 5,000 and 10,000m at the 2000 Games in Sydney. Yifter the Shifter - a nickname he earned through his ability to destroy opposition with sudden bursts of speed - achieved his double at the 1980 Moscow Olympics. He was followed by, among millions of others, a small Ethiopian boy listening to a radio in a mud hut.

The boy was Gebrselassie, who recalled recently how he had risked his father's wrath by "borrowing" his radio and battery to listen to the Olympic commentary.

His father, who only allowed the radio to be used for listening to news programmes, never detected the temporary theft.

"I am sure he would have killed me if he had discovered what I had done," Gebrselassie said. Lucky for him - lucky for world athletics - that his father didn't.

By Mike Rowbottom

COLIN JACKSON, the world record-holder in the high hurdles, has been forced to postpone his return to long jumping for the second time this year.

The 31-year-old, who plans to long jump at this year's European Championships and Commonwealth Games, was scheduled to compete at a meeting in Milan on Friday, but organisers have cancelled the long jump. Last month Jackson had to abandon plans to long jump in Jena, Germany, after bruising a heel when falling in his opening 110 metres hurdles race of the summer. "Things are working against Colin at the moment," Malcolm Arnold, his coach, said. "He will just have to look around to see when he can fit it in again in his schedule."

Jackson jumped a wind-assisted 7.96m as a teenager and has targeted his fellow Welshman Lynn Davies's 30-year-old British record of 8.23m. But his plans to double up for Britain in the European Cup in St Petersburg at the end of this

month could be in trouble unless he can get in a qualifying jump before the selection date of 15 June.

Jackson leads this year's world rankings over the hurdles with his time of 13.14sec set in Chemnitz, Germany, late last month - his fastest opening to a season since the year he won the world title, 1993. The world champion, Allen Johnson of the United States, ran 13.12 in Eugene, Oregon, on Sunday, but the time was wind-assisted.

Donovan Bailey, Canada's 100m world record-holder, announced yesterday that he will retire after the 2000 Olympic Games. Bailey said: "I'll be aiming to win the world title in 1999 in Seville and I think I'll finish my career with the Sydney Olympics. After that I'll finally be able to smoke a fat cigar. But until then I still want to go out there and beat the Americans."

Paula Radcliffe left Monday night's Hengelo meeting, highly encouraged after setting a personal best of 4min 05.81sec in the 1500m behind Gabriela Szabo, who won in 4:02.91.

Leaving Las Vegas as gambling mecca is hit hard by sleaze

ALARM BELLS are ringing in boxing. This weekend New York stages its first World Heavyweight Championship fight since February 1993, when Evander Holyfield defends his World Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation titles against Henry Akinwande. But the fight at the self-proclaimed Mecca of Boxing, Madison Square Garden, has focused attention on the lack of action of Las Vegas, the world's boxing capital.

An easy explanation, for next Saturday's fight site is that the legendary Garden is but a short Manhattan stroll from the US District Court building where the show's promoter, Don King, faces a re-trial on charges of insurance fraud against Lloyds of London. But close proximity might prove irrelevant to King if the \$43m (£27m) that the FBI has invested in trying to nail the controversial promoter second time around is money well spent: the former jail-

bird (two counts of manslaughter) could be behind bars again by next weekend.

However, King's alleged offences pale into insignificance compared to events that have made Las Vegas do the unthinkable and seemingly turn its back on boxing, which traditionally boosts the local economy by amounts befitting the ostentatious standards of both the city and the sport.

Last weekend was one to remember on the Las Vegas Strip. King's promotion at the Hilton hotel was low-key, with no star names involved, but its significance cannot be underestimated. Boxing breathes a sigh of relief that finally Vegas has staged its first world title fight of the year, ending the gambling Mecca's longest championship bout drought in 20 years.

In 1997, 25 world title fights were staged in Las Vegas. But Friday night's contest was the city's first since November 1997, when Holyfield gained revenge over Michael

The world's boxing capital appears to have turned its back on the sport. Glyn Leach reports on the changes

Moorer, a promotion estimated to have lost \$10m; a heavy beating even by the high-roller levels of the Valley of the Dollars.

The promotion gambled that the damage done last summer, when Mike Tyson famously savaged Holyfield's ear in their rematch and was subsequently placed under licence-suspension, would not be long lasting. But the injury to the public's perception of boxing ran deep.

Las Vegas has long struggled to rid itself of its seedy, "mob town" image. The prostitute and drug dealers have been cleared from the tourist areas, and the city's hotel-casinos now compete for the family dollar. But the city's long-standing relationship with boxing appears counter-productive to its new goals, a situation best

exemplified by the experiences of the world's largest hotel, the MGM Grand.

When the MGM opened in 1993, it was the first of the Las Vegas hotels to go totally "family". It had a Wizard of Oz theme (wake-up calls by Dorothy), a theme park (now closed), and 5,000 rooms to cater for the expected human influx - the amount of visitors to the "new" Las Vegas increases by, on average, 10 per cent each year and it is currently estimated at 30m per annum. But, unwittingly, the new establishment's involvement with boxing has been central to the problems the sport faces in Vegas today.

MGM boxing started with a flourish. In 1995 the hotel signed Tyson, recently released from jail on a rape charge, who received a financial package estimated at \$200m for a six-fight deal. But Tyson proved to be an embarrassment; his fight against Frank Bruno, attracted some of the worst elements of Britain's sports fans; the

Hilton, the Mirage - kept diaries full of empty dates, the MGM staged five "mega-fights". It hosted 32 world championship bouts in its first two years of operation.

The MGM quickly became a major player, but soon overplayed its hand. Press releases proudly stated that it would take a person 13 years and eight months to stay in a new MGM room every day, but it has taken only a third of that time for the establishment to feature significantly in events that have brought Las Vegas boxing to its knees.

Desperate to capitalise on early success, in 1995 the hotel signed Tyson, recently released from jail on a rape charge, who received a financial package estimated at \$200m for a six-fight deal. But Tyson proved to be an embarrassment; his fight against Frank Bruno, attracted some of the worst elements of Britain's sports fans; the

gangsta rap poster boy Tupac Shakur, who attended Tyson's farcical win over Bruce Seldon, was shot dead after the fight; then came Tyson's defeat by Holyfield and his atrocious behaviour in their rematch, following which gun shots rang out in the hotel foyer. The MGM had seen enough of Tyson after five fights and, following the financial failure of Holyfield-Moorer, Vegas appears to have seen enough of big-time boxing for the time being.

New York has a reputation as the hardest town for a boxing promotion to succeed in. New York State taxes gate receipts (Nevada does not), while local television taxes are the highest in the United States. When Holyfield's latest defence was announced in March, boxing insiders, after querying the obvious ("Why Akinwande?"), could only question: "Why New York?". Almost inconceivably, Las Vegas appears to be asking: "Why boxing?"

هكذا من الأصل

Brazil reel as Romario is forced out

Football

By Rupert Metcalf

ROMARIO yesterday became the latest high-profile performer to find that, like Paul Gascoigne, he will be watching the World Cup from the sidelines, and not participating on the pitch in the planet's biggest sporting occasion.

Brazil's coach, Mario Zagallo, excluded Romario from his World Cup squad yesterday – and the temperamental striker who did so much to help his country win the tournament in 1994 broke down and wept as he faced the Brazilian media.

The Flamengo forward's place was taken by the defensive midfielder Emerson Ferreira of Bayer Leverkusen in a move that caused widespread amazement back home.

Romario was Brazil's hero at USA 94, when he scored five goals, and he had dreamt that his partnership with Ronaldo would help him achieve a repeat performance in France. Instead, a nagging calf muscle injury has forced the 32-year-old out of what would surely have been his last World Cup.

Romario, who on Sunday had said he would be fit to face Scotland in the opening match of the finals a week, today,

broke down twice during his press conference as he described how upset he was.

"This is very sad for me, a big disappointment," he said. "This is a very difficult moment in my life. From now on, I will start to give value to other things," he said, before burying his face in his hands.

"I just want to thank the national team for having given me the chance to become what I am." At that point, Romario broke down for a third time and was led away to a standing ovation from the press.

Prior to Romario's emotional farewell, the team doctor, Lidio Toledo, had explained that a scan taken on Monday had shown that Romario still had an injury to his right calf muscle. "This type of injury can take 10 or 15 days or even a month to get better," he said.

Zagallo said Romario had been given longer to prove his fitness than other players would have been. "This was a special case because of his status and his importance to the team," the coach said. "We waited until the last possible moment. We gave him our full backing. We did the best we could."

"It wasn't us who dropped Romario. It was the scan," the veteran coach added. "This is sad, it is part of life, it is part of

our reality. You have to make decisions and we have made one."

Zagallo said that Emerson was chosen because he already had five other players capable of playing in attack – even though there are now only three recognised strikers in his squad. Bebeto or Edmundo are likely to partner Ronaldo up front against Scotland but, as the coach pointed out, the midfielders Rivaldo and Denilson are both capable of moving into attack.

"We are short of players who can play in front of the defence," Zagallo added after a training session in Ozoir-la-Ferrière, France. "We have made the right decision. I was not going to pick another big-name player just to make people happy. I don't like making other people happy. I like to make myself happy. Romario has gone – but in 1962 we lost Pelé and we still won."

Ronaldo, whom Romario would have partnered in attack, had the last word. "We had plans for this World Cup – but now they won't happen," the international striker said.

As well as the Scots, Brazil must face Norway in the first round in France. The Norwegian coach, Egil Olsen, was yesterday reported as saying that the world champions might be knocked out in the group stage – and he added that England are a "sorry sight".

In a friendly in Oslo a year ago, Olsen's team beat Brazil 4-2. "Both Scotland and Morocco [the other team in the group] could in a lucky moment take a point from Brazil," he told a Norwegian newspaper. "It's not unthinkable that Brazil could be knocked out in the first round, even though I don't think that will happen."

Olsen visited Casablanca at the weekend and saw Morocco draw 2-2 with France and England draw 0-0 with Belgium in the King Hassan Cup. He said Morocco and France were good teams and Belgium moderately good. "But England were a sorry sight and clearly the least aggressive in attack," he added.

Ken Jones on England's 1996 triumph, page 28



Romario in France yesterday, after being left out of Brazil's World Cup squad due to a calf injury Photograph: Reuters

Desailly set to sign for Chelsea

By Catherine Riley

CHELSEA are set to double their spending in the space of a week by signing Marcel Desailly for £5m from Milan, following last week's capture of Pierluigi Casiraghi for £5.4m.

Desailly, named in France's World Cup squad yesterday, is believed to have been offered a four-year contract worth around £40,000 a week.

Lionel Pérez, meanwhile, is to double the number of former Sunderland goalkeepers at Newcastle by moving on a free transfer on 1 July. Pérez will join Shay Given, who had a successful loan period on Wearside when he was at Blackburn.

The Frenchman's departure leaves Peter Reid, the Sunderland manager, needing to strengthen his squad. He may not have far to look, however, as he is believed to be interested in taking Simeon from Newcastle.

Rangers have denied they are trying to tempt Alan Shearer into a move to Glasgow, admitting they have no chance of signing him. Newcastle have consistently stated that Shearer is not for sale and Rangers' vice-chairman, Donald Findlay, said any move for the England captain would not be practical.

Also keeping a firm grip on their players are Liverpool, who yesterday said Karlheinz Riedle and Patrik Berger are not about to be sold to Paris St-Germain and Benfica respectively.

Tottenham were also in denial yesterday, saying they had not offered Italian side Empoli £5m for their striker Carmine Esposito, despite a statement to the contrary on Clubcall.

Bolton's Alan Thompson looks to have to make a choice between Leeds and Aston Villa if both clubs make the same offer. Villa are looking for a compromise between their valuation of £3.5m and the asking price of £5m, while Leeds say Bolton will let them match any offer and they could be favourites as the 24-year-old midfielder is believed to want to stay in the north.

Organisers of a pre-season friendly tournament in the Netherlands have withdrawn Nottingham Forest's invitation because of fears of unwanted publicity as one of the teams involved is Anderlecht.

Forest are taking the Belgium club to court in a bid to claim compensation over allegations they bribed the referee of their 1984 UEFA Cup semi-final.

FA back museum's bid to buy Moore's World Cup medal

THE Football Association and the National Football Museum said yesterday they would team up in a bid to keep former England captain Bobby Moore's World Cup winners' medal from falling into foreign hands.

Moore's first wife, Tina, who lives in the United States, has put the medal from England's 1966 World Cup victory and other memorabilia up for sale and there are fears the trophies could end up overseas.

Most of the money for the bid, expected to be more than £2m, would come from the National Lottery. Robert Pratten, curator of the museum which plans to open next year, confirmed they had submitted an

application to the Lottery fund to buy the collection.

An FA spokesman said yesterday: "As a museum their case is strong and we have offered our support. We also believe there may be a company or individual who would want to be associated with procuring the collection."

The FA has been examining ways of ensuring the trophies stayed in England and said it would be delighted if West Ham United, Moore's former club, succeeded in an application they have already lodged with the Lottery fund.

"The FA has one priority, to keep the collection in England," the spokesman said.

Venables: 'I would have picked Gascoigne'

By Bill Pierce

TERRY VENABLES, the former England manager, said yesterday that he would have picked Paul Gascoigne for the World Cup. "If we are talking about a decision based purely on Gazza's fitness then I would have taken him in a squad of 22," he said, commenting on Glenn Hoddle's decision to discard the 31-year-old midfielder from his squad.

"We are told he was 65-70 per cent fit, although I believe he was more than that," said

Venables. "Obviously he hasn't done himself any favours," he added, partly in reference to the fact that Gascoigne yesterday admitted in a national newspaper that he was drunk just a few hours before Hoddle told him in La Manga at the weekend that he was out of the squad.

"But it is not as though you have got to pick a squad of just 12 at this stage," added Venables. "We are talking about 22 for a competition that lasts seven weeks. I would have taken him, watched his progress and

been prepared to put him on the bench or even in the team depending on how he developed.

"Maybe it would not have mattered if he had not played at all in any of the first round matches. But there would still have been time to get something out of him. The further you go in a big tournament like the World Cup or Euro 96 the more you need players who can make a difference in a match.

Venables, who signed Gascoigne for £2.2m for Tottenham from Newcastle in 1990 and

made him an automatic selection for Euro 96, added: "I believe Gazza was still our best player when we qualified for the World Cup against Italy back in October. I know Gazza had not had a drink until that party for 11 days. These boys work hard and have to have a release now and then. But in the end the manager or coach of the team makes his decision on what he thinks is best for everybody and Glenn has made his."

World Cup security conference, page 11

Back problem forces Woods to pull out

Golf

By Andy Farrell

TIGER WOODS, who has had a history of back problems, is undergoing a course of physiotherapy in an attempt to ensure his participation in the US Open in a fortnight's time. Woods pulled out of this week's Kemper Open in order to fly to Las Vegas for treatment to his back from his physiotherapist, Keith Kleven.

Last year's Masters champion, who had not previously missed an event due to injury in his 21-month professional career, had been planning to make his last appearance this week before the year's second major at the Olympic club in San Francisco from 18-21 June.

Woods, 22, recently underwent an MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scan after suffering from back problems since childhood. He felt his back stiffen up on the flight on Sunday to Orlando from Columbus, where he had been playing in the Memorial Tournament, and it worsened when he went to practice on Monday morning.

Ben Bunderd, the tournament chairman of the Kemper Open, was called personally by Woods that afternoon, when he decided to pull out of the event. "This is a precautionary measure to ensure that Tiger is ready and able to play in the US Open," Bev Norwood, a spokesman for Woods' agents, the International Management

Group, said. "This physical therapist advised him that with the US Open coming up he could aggravate the condition by playing this week." The programme consists of heat and ice, stretching and back stabilisation.

IMG, meanwhile, denied the condition was a threat to Woods' career. "It is not threatening his ability to play golf," Norwood said. "But it is a problem that Tiger has to be aware of and get treatment for periodically."

"Tiger has had back pains on and off and his parents have always assumed they were growing pains. But the therapist has been working with for six months said there were some irregularities in his lower back. His condition, however, is not as severe as it is for other players, like Fred Couples."

Couples has had to limit his schedule and reduce the amount of overseas trips in recent years, but collected his second victory of the year at the Memorial Tournament on Sunday. Woods, who won for the first time in the States this year at the Bell South Classic a month ago, slipped to his worst result of the season as he finished 51st, 17 strokes behind Couples.

Back problems are nothing new to top-class golfers and Seve Ballesteros, Ian Woosnam, Bernhard Langer and Davis Love are fellow sufferers. The strain on Woods' back is considerable as it is his huge shoulder turn and high hip speed which generate the power for his big hitting.

In common with Ballesteros and Greg Norman, Woods started practising his violent action at a very young age. Although Norman continued to compete at the highest level until recently because – unlike Ballesteros – he remodelled his swing, the 43-year-old Australian is currently out of the game for seven months following shoulder surgery.

Perhaps Woods will have to rein in his swing sooner than he thought. But he is fortunate that his coach, Butch Harmon, is the man who successfully brought off a similar trick with Norman.

Norman has already raised concerns about Woods' long-term fitness. "Tiger has a suspect back even now at 22," Norman said prior to the Masters. "The wear and tear he does hitting balls every day is not going to make it any better and that will niggle away at him."

Olympic is a course Woods knows well as he played it many times as a student. However, the more strategic gameplan needed for a US Open challenge seemed to elude Woods a year ago at Congressional, where he finished 19th. Power is less of an advantage over accuracy, especially as the rough at Olympic promises to be some of the thickest ever seen at a US Open, due to the El Niño storms which battered the west coast of America earlier in the year.

● The Open will return to the links course of Muirfield in 2002. It will be the 15th Open hosted by the Scottish course.

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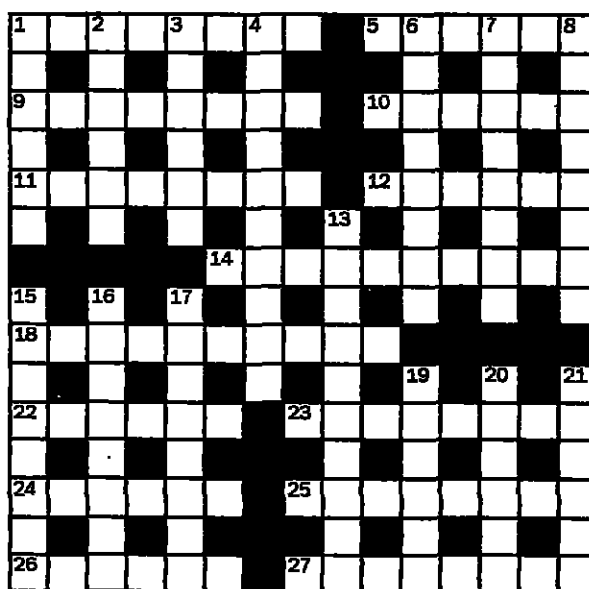
25 years and still going strong

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3627 Wednesday 3 June

By Agatha

Thursday's Solution



1 BROTHERS
2 IN
3 A
4 F
5 D
6 HIGH
7 COUNTRY
8 R
9 T
10 H
11 C
12 H
13 S
14 R
15 A
16 ISSUE
17 TRANS
18 FEND
19 S
20 T
21 W
22 T
23 R
24 U
25 R
26 G
27 R
28 E
29 N
30 A
31 D
32 I
33 N
34 G
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86 T
87 A
88 T
89 E
90 S
91 T
92 A
93 T
94 E
95 S
96 T
97 A
98 T
99 E
100 S

- ACROSS**
- Real tennis, perhaps, legitimate object for ridicule (4,4)
 - An apartment has nothing in it that is free of debt (6)
 - Self-banking aircraft of earlier times (8)
 - Clergyman who puts value on copper (6)
 - Twin, all-pearl setting (8)
 - Spring in Brussels? (6)
 - Subtly eclipse bit of referendum (10)
 - Accusative case, his, in court (10)
 - German relative changing coins around university (6)
 - Newsround popular? (8)

- DOWN**
- Little fellow with paper-round is chilled (6)
 - Confine by rote, say? (6)
 - Grey-headed, silver leg variety of geese (6)
 - Sensational overall sum paid out (10)
 - Dowdy hag, say, taking in seat? (8)
 - Job, say, for speaker at No. 10 (8)
 - Setting for important events in Mayfair and

- Whitehall (8)**
- Discharge of tar compound (10)
 - No broad-spectrum remedy, this (8)
 - Poisoning from bangers, mainly, but limos can produce it (8)
 - Challenge of French husband-to-be (8)
 - Approaching resort of St. Malo (6)
 - Blood tax? (6)
 - Part of meal taken from chosen trees (6)